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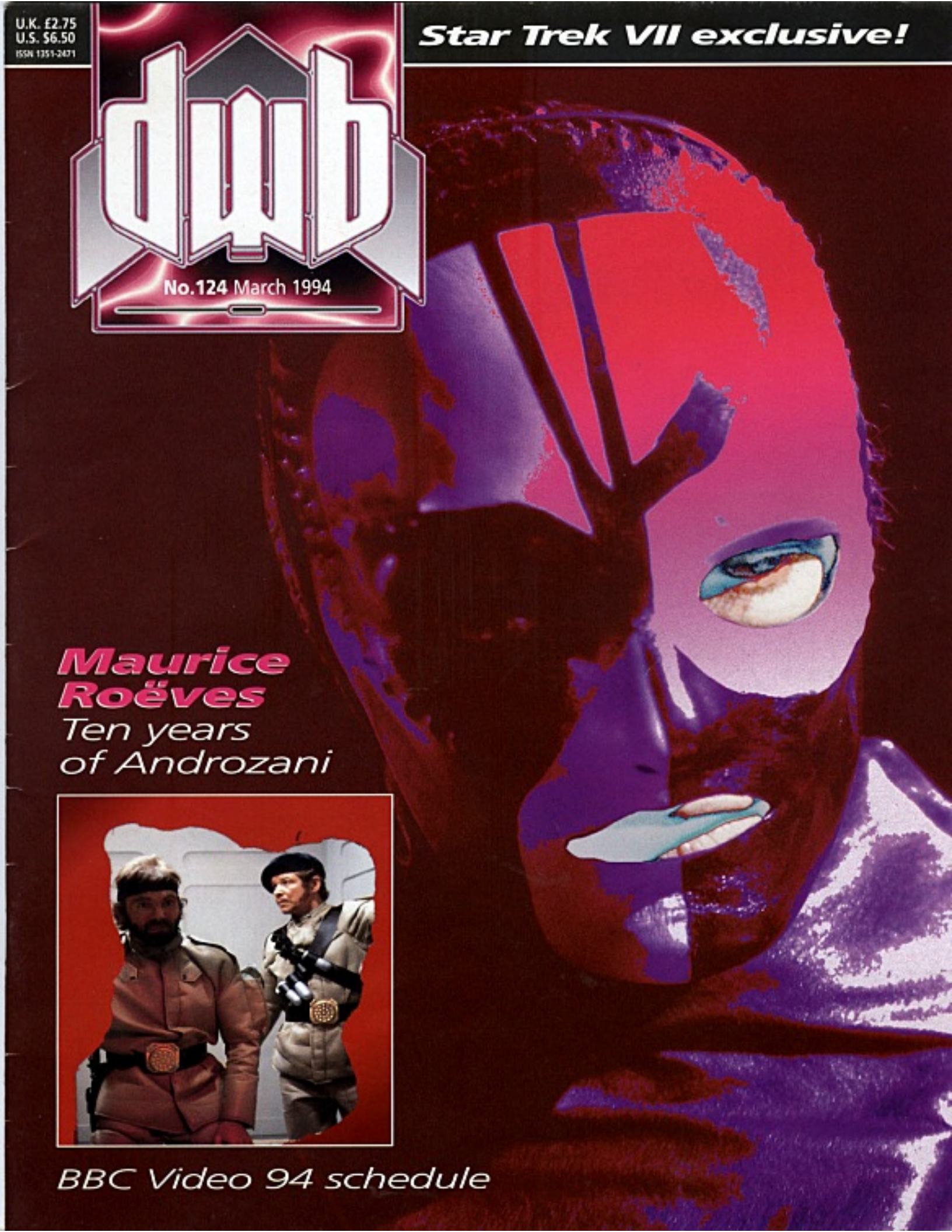
Star Trek VII exclusive!



Maurice Roëves
Ten years of Androzani

BBC Video 94 schedule

DreamWatch Bulletin 124
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A story for you typo spotters. Occasionally(!), you may have noticed, DWB features unexplained spaces within words, or lacks spaces between words... That's because the screen can't accurately represent horizontal spacings at small type-sizes, so you're not sure if it's really there even if you do spot it... Of course the nightmare is that you'll create two words by doing this, so that even the spellchecker won't catch it...well, the Daily Mirror's recently managed to describe a **'therapist'** as **'the rapist'**. 1) I wouldn't like to be their libel lawyer; and 2) I'll be having nightmares about the possibilities for months...

With Gary applying the finishing touches to the Interview File this month and off on his annual leave the next, I'm stand-in Newsdesk editor for a couple of issues, but full service will assume from DWB126.

Oh, and belated birthday greetings to Tom Baker, who turned *sixty* in January, hence this issue's focus on his major, neglected gem...

ANTHONY

CONTENTS

Letters 7
Maurice Roeves interview 9
It's the End of the World as we know it 12
The Deadly Assassins at the BBC 14
Spacescape - Ian Scoones' WHO designs 15
Neglected Gems - Season Sixteen 17
STAR TREK episode guide 18
21st Century Visions review 21
STAR TREK book reviews 21
SURVIVORS tape six review 23
***Tragedy Day* review** 24
Fanzine review 24
***Arc of Infinity* review** 26

Cover: Maurice Roeves as Stotz in *The Caves of Androzani* (© *The Fitzroy Source*)
Inside front cover: Tom Baker and Lis Sladen in *The Seeds of Doom*, 1976, out on video in 1994...
Inside back cover: The Castellan (Paul Jerricho) & Maxil (Colin Baker), and The Doctor (Peter davison) and Nyssa (Sarah Sutton) — *Arc of Infinity* (© *The Fitzroy Source*)
Back cover: Romanadvoratrelundar (Mary Tamm) , *The Androids of Tara* (© *Fitzroy Source*)
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NEXT ISSUE: BLAKE'S SEVEN is BACK!

COMPETITION WINNERS: Wrs of the Archangel Media competition are - Reverse the Polarity: Claire Brotherton, Tony Kirke & S Blenkinsop (Jon Pertwee was born 7th July 1919); Under the Hammer: Jason A Skirvin, Martin Wesley & Simon Gulliford (Bonham's is at Lots Road Chelsea & Montpelier Street Knightsbridge)

SEEDS OF DOOM ON VIDEO IN '94!

The Colin Baker Years in March...

The Green Death and *Revelation of the Daleks* dropped!

CRITICS of last year's BBC Video schedule should be happier with 1994's *provisional* selection, which includes the long-awaited and much demanded release of the season fourteen classic *The Seeds of Doom*. The line-up also includes the highest rated (according to last year's DWB poll) intact, unreleased and unrepeated stories from four of the five Doctors represented, and a particular bias towards the Peter Davison era.

Revelation of the Daleks has been pulled due to yet *more* clearance problems with Roger Hancock (*Destiny of the Daleks*, a Nation scripted story and the only unrepeated Dalek story awaiting release, naturally escapes the veto), as has *The Green Death* due to its recent airing on BBC2. *Ghost Light* will now fill the slot of the former in May, while *The Colin Baker Years* - completed and paid for some time ago - is being rush-released for March. With a running time of ninety minutes, it is introduced by Colin Baker who reminisces over clips from his era, and includes his appearances on JIM'LL FIX IT, BLUE PETER, BREAKFAST TIME and the 'Shadow' series. It will retail at £12.99 (catalogue no. BBCV 5324).

The successful pairing of two-parters with adjacent stories - first tried in 1991 with *The Sontaran Experiment* and *Genesis of the Daleks* - returns in force this year. However, with only six episodes over two tapes - the four-parter awkwardly split over both - they will undoubtedly incur the wrath of some...

•**The recent** £7.99 budget range has given a new lease of life to several of the stories re-released in unedited formats for the first time. *Pyramids of Mars*, *Day of the Daleks* and *The Ark in Space* returned to the top 30 video sales chart on their week of release at 20, 21 and 29 respectively.

March	*Arc of Infinity*	**September**	*The Seeds of Doom*
	The Colin Baker Years		*Kinda* (or *Snakedance*)
May	*Ghost Light*		*Thirty Years in the TARDIS* (provisional)
	Inferno	**November**	*The Rescue/The Romans*
July	*The Visitation/Black Orchid*		*Snakedance* (or *Kinda*)
	Destiny of the Daleks		*The Greatest Show in the Galaxy*

AMBLIN DEAL 'NEARING FRUITION'

THE AMBLIN DEAL for DOCTOR WHO seems almost certain to go through following BBC Enterprises' successful 'fact-finding' mission to LA in January, and, indeed, could even have been signed by now.

A recent BBC press release confirms that discussions are 'nearing fruition', but with the earliest time the series could now effectively reach the small-screen being Autumn '95, Amblin are unlikely to want to make any form of an announcement until the most appropriate time between now and then to achieve the maximum impact possible on the crucial US market.

Speculation about Amblin's choice of Doctor continues to abound. They are understood to be considering a British actor who has enjoyed considerable success on both prime-time UK television and the US stage, though not necessarily Michael Crawford or Richard O'Brien as some British newspapers have suggested...

The BBC apparently intends putting a considerable investment into the co-production deal, and is unlikely, therefore, to be a sleeping partner, hopefully ensuring the continued 'Britishness' of the production.

The BBC statement of the 31st January stresses that Amblin are negotiating only for the TV rights, as the film rights remain with Green Light — an intriguing conflict to earlier reports that their rights had expired...

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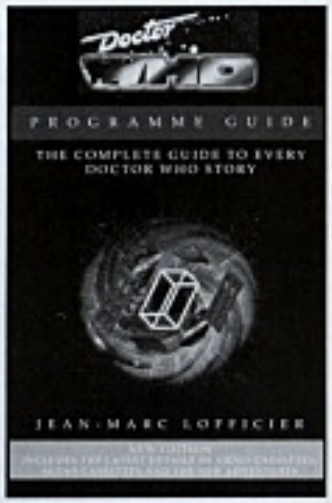

VIRGIN GEAR UP FOR *MISSING ADVENTURES*

Alister Pearson has been assigned the task of jacketting the MISSING ADVENTURE, the first of which, *Goth Opera*, is published in July, alongside the NEW ADVENTURE to which it is a sequel, *Blood Harvest*.The revised *Programme Guide* is due in June, along with Andy Lane's *The All Consuming Fire* featuring, as the cover indicates, Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson and written in the first-person style of the Conan Doyle tales).

The latest NEW ADVENTURE to be confirmed is Daniel O'Mahony's *Faits the Shadow*, which takes the place provisionally allocated to John Peel's *War of the Daleks* in December.

PARADISE OF DEATH REPEAT RESCHEDULED

***THE PARADISE OF DEATH* repeat, originally to have been run over Christmas, has been rescheduled to run from Tuesday 12th April (or week 15 in Beeb Speak), at 7pm on Radio Two. The novelisation, by happy coincidence, will be published the following week.**

Ratings for the repeat will decide the future of the series on radio, which would at first glance appear out of place on a network currently aimed at the over fifties. Though *Paradise of Death* was one of the doomed Radio Five's better-rated programmes, Radio Two's average audience is significantly larger, so repeat listening would be advised...

•**Not content** with axeing Radio Five just as its ratings begin to rise, the New Model BBC has triumphed again on Radio Four, where the entire team from one of their most popular series, GARDENERS' QUESTION TIME, has defected to Classic FM in response to attempts by its new independent production company to make the programme 'appeal to a more diverse audience'. Radio Four have retaliated by scrapping three completed programmes featuring the departing team...Similar personnel changes at Radio One have led to a distinct audience decline...

THE RETURN OF POWELL

I will come from the deepest pit of Carltob to haunt you, Doctor... Jonathan Powell, ex-Controller of BBC1, is reported to be leaving Carlton (to whom *Private Eye* recently apologised for suggesting that they'd made a decent programme), and returning to the BBC. Though his new post in the drama department (apparently supervising series)will represent a considerable demotion from his old job, he will still be ranked as an executive instead of making an arguably more logical return to production. Don Henderson recently spoke out in the press against his re-instatement, pitying the BBC for taking back the man who 'cancelled THE PARADISE CLUB and DOCTOR WHO '...

THE GREEN DEATH RECOVERS AFTER DROPPING BELOW ONE MILLION...

WITH RATINGS for the first five episodes in, *The Green Death* is once again holding its own after episode three became the first DOCTOR WHO episode to rate below one million...

The Green Death 1 - 1,308,000
The Green Death 2 - 1,147,000
The Green Death 3 - 844,000
The Green Death 4 - 1,131,000
The Green Death 5 - 1,291,000

•DOCTOR WHO returns on March 6th after the Winter Olympics with a four part Tom Baker story, hotly-tipped to be either *Horror of Fang Rock* or *State of Decay* - the story it 'replaced' as the fifteenth season opener...

UK Gold

UK GOLD continue DOCTOR WHO into March with the remainder of season 15, screened in production order.

14th-17th (Feb): *The Sun Makers*
18th-23rd: *Image of the Fendahl*
24th-1st (March): *Underworld*
2nd-9th: *The Invasion of Time*
10th-15th: *The Ribos Operation*

Season sixteen, fortunately, was screened in production order!

Coming Soon...

Just out and February...

SPACE 1999: *The Beta Cloud/A Matter of Balance* (video)
SPACE 1999: *The Lambda Factor/The Seance Spectre* (video)
RANDALL & HOPKIRK (DECEASED): *Just for the Record/The Man from Nowhere* (video)
RANDALL & HOPKIRK (DECEASED): *A Sentimental Journey/Somebody Just Walked Over My Grave* (video)
DEPARTMENT S -*The Double Death of Charlie Crippen*/**JASON KING** - *A Red Rose Forever* (video)
DEPARTMENT S -*The Bones of Byron Blaine*/**JASON KING** - *A Kiss for the Beautiful Killer* (video)
3rd ***DOCTOR WHO Classic Comics 17*** (£2.50)
7th **DEEP SPACE 9:** *Fallen Heroes* (Daffyd Hugh)
7th Young **DEEP SPACE 9:** *The Star Ghost* (Brad Strickland)
7th **NEXT GENERATION:** *The Devil's Heart* (Carmen Carter)
7th **STAR TREK:** *Transformations* (Dave Stern/audio)
7th **SURVIVORS:** *Law and Order/the Future Hour* (video)
7th **SURVIVORS:** *Revenge/Something of Value/A Beginning* (video)
17th **THE NEW ADVENTURES:** ***No Future*** (Paul Cornell)
17th ***DOCTOR WHO Magazine 210*** (£2.50)
17th DOCTOR WHO reprint: *The Robots of Death* (Terrance Dicks)
24th STAR TREK: *Perry's Planet* (Jack Halderman)
28th **THE AVENGERS** - *The Dangermakers/The See Through Man* (video)
28th **THE AVENGERS** - *Small Game for Big Hunters/The Hidden Tiger (video)*
28th **THE AVENGERS** - *Game/They Keep Killing Steed* (video)

March

THE CHAMPIONS - *The Bodysnatchers/The Survivors* (video)
THE CHAMPIONS - *The Gunrunners/The Mission* (video)
3rd ***DOCTOR WHO Classic Comics 18*** (£2.50)
7th **DOCTOR WHO** - ***Ghost Light*** (video)
7th **DOCTOR WHO** - ***Arc of Infinity*** (video)
7th **DEEP SPACE 9** - *Warped* (KW Jeter - Hardback)
7th **THE NEXT GENERATION** - *Sarek* (AC Crispin - Hardback)
17th **THE NEW ADVENTURES** - *Tragedy Day* (Gareth Roberts)
17th **DOCTOR WHO** - ***Decalogue*** (editor - Stephen James Walker)
17th DOCTOR WHO reprint - *The Talons of Weng Chiang* (Terrance Dicks)
17th **THE AVENGERS** Programme Guide (Topping/Cornell/Day)
17th ***DOCTOR WHO Magazine 211*** (£2.50)

April

4th **STAR TREK** - *Patrician Transgression* (Simon Hawke)
4th **STAR TREK ENCYCLOPEDIA** (Michael & Denise Okuda & Debbie Mirek)
4th Young **DEEP SPACE 9** - *Stowaways* (Brad Strickland)

HOW NOW, CASH COW?

STAR TREK VII in chaos a month before filming...

CAN PARAMOUNT function as it finds itself the object of a giddy bidding war between media tycoons at the same time that it sets out to become a major broadcaster as well as producer of entertainment? How well it takes care of its no. one cash cow, "the franchise", the "tent pole" of the studio's fortune is rather disheartening as an example.

As everyone knows by now, the studio has decided that the time has come to pass on the feature film chores of the STAR TREK juggernaut to the cast of THE NEXT GENERATION. While this seems inevitable given the age and high maintenance costs of the original series cast, the quality of the thinking that has gone into this transition leaves much to be desired.

First of all, Michael Piller was alienated early in the process and will apparently have little or nothing to do with the new films taking shape under the auspices of Rick Berman. While Piller may not be a master storyteller, he is the most relentlessly self-critical member of the team that has been producing TNG and DS9 for the past three or four years, and that is a quality that has been lacking in the film project. Next, security has been so poor that a synopses of the first draft of the TNG film fell into the hands of the tabloid press almost before the cast could see it.

And virtually no one who is expected to appear in it is happy with the script. The original series cast, who were expected to sign on to make a last brief appearance at the beginning of the film before all but one of their number would disappear from the story are not happy about being treated as trophies displayed for the occasion. On the other hand, THE NEXT GENERATION cast — whose show has lasted far longer on television and with far wider viewership both in the United States and abroad — are insulted that studio executives feel it is necessary to prop them up for the film by bringing in the original cast at all.

The one exception to that may be Patrick Stewart, who has long said that he felt it was appropriate to have both casts participate — but he may have read ahead and seen that he was going to get to bury James T. Kirk! In any case, even Stewart expressed dissatisfaction with the first draft, which he has said was more like an expanded series episode than a real film script. Brent Spiner has said that he actually would prefer not to do the films at all. In his opinion TNG should be left to stand on its own as a television series, "the medium it was created for and works best in."

Cynics might conclude that there must not be a large part for Data in the film, but in fact many of the cast have expressed reservations about losing the balance between the different characters which has characterised the television series (to the envy of many of the original series cast). Films tend to focus on fewer characters and, of course, only appear once every couple of years.

But the most dramatic pronouncements have come from the stalwarts of the original series. Leonard Nimoy, once highly touted to direct the first TNG film, has publicly declared that he does not like the script and will not appear in the film. What this roughly translates into is that there is nothing in it but a cameo for Spock and he is not going to be permitted to direct it, so he has no interest in doing it under those circumstances. Paramount is apparently quite tired of all the negotiations and contractual complexities introduced when Nimoy and Shatner began to get complimentary clauses about directing built into their contracts, and has decided to put an end to that frustrating process by refusing to allow either Nimoy, Shatner or Nicholas Meyer to come within hailing distance of the TREK director's chair again. This also makes it unlikely that TNG cast members will have a shot at directing a film, despite Jonathan Frakes' acknowledged talent behind the camera.

In addition, George Takei may not appear in the film, feeling his brief role is quite a comedown from being the dashing Captain of the huge Excelsior. On the other hand, the studio rather blindly has given the notoriously demanding William Shatner a stick with which to beat it. By deciding that a sure fire audience grabber for the film would be a meeting of the two Captains of the starship Enterprise, they not only offended Nimoy (who played arguably the most important original series character) but put a powerful bargaining chip into the hands of Shatner — especially given what they want him to do. So it is no surprise that he has been saying that he has Paramount "over a barrel" and has been demanding both script changes and a great deal of money as the scheduled filming start date (March 21) draws near.

And will audiences be dancing in the aisles if the film gets made in the proposed form? Probably not. The script propounded by TNG staff writers Ronald D. Moore and Brannon Braga reads like a compilation of elements drawn from *Star Treks III, V* and *VI*, which makes little use of the distinct characters and storylines of TNG. For example, a TOS cast member is to die - gee, we've never seen that before, have we? For variety it will be Kirk instead of Spock, unless Shatner forces a loophole to allow for future appearances. An eccentric Vulcan abuses his position to seek a unique point in the universe that transcends the ordinary laws of space and time. At least this one is not related to Spock, unless Sarek has some more secret sons around the galaxy. The Enterprise D goes into battle against Klingons and is destroyed, abandoning the crew on a planet with hostile Klingons. Maybe Christopher Lloyd should do a cameo too? Captain Picard becomes reflective and moody when death unexpectedly claims someone close to him. Hasn't facing up to mortality been pretty well hashed over in *Treks II, III,* and *VI*?

Supposedly $50 million has been allocated for the film and a director has been offered a contract. Whoopi Goldberg's agent rejected the offer to appear in what amounts to a small role, saying she is too big a star now to do such a small part. However, within the day Goldberg learned of the offer and said she would do it to appear in a TREK film with her friends from TNG.

The release date for the film has been moved up from Christmas, 1994 to late November, making a quick start to filming all the more imperative. The plot gives Shatner his wish not to have to appear in aged form in the TNG universe, but he may not wish to die. Should he decline to appear like Nimoy it is doubtful that any of the remaining original cast would replace Kirk in the concluding sequence.

If the film is deemed successful the next TNG film is tentatively scheduled to begin work in late Spring, 1995, with a script featuring Q.

STII Plot Synopsis *(Don't say we didn't warn you...)*

THE STORY opens with the original series crew assembled once again to witness the christening of the new Enterprise B. Their little inaugural cruise is interrupted by an emergency call for help from a ship caught in a distructive ribbon of energy. They manage to rescue the crew and passengers, which includes refugees from the destruction of a distant world and a Vulcan named Soran. One of the refugees is Guinan. In the rescue James Kirk is lost without a trace. This sequence lasts for about the first 15 minutes of the movie and only Kirk will be seen again of the original series cast.

The scene then shifts to 72 years later, where the Romulans are attacking an observatory run by Dr. Soran, whom they believe holds the key to making a powerful new weapon. The Enterprise D arrives in time to drive off the Romulan force, but Picard is unusually withdrawn. Troi eventually discovers that he received word that his brother Robert simply dropped dead while working in his vineyards, the victim of time.

Soran may have been saved from the Romulans, but it soon becomes clear that he has made a deal with the Duras sisters to use the secrets he controls to help them recapture the Klingon Empire. Guinan reveals her knowledge about Soran's past to Picard and tells him Soran wants to use the energy ribbon to go to a place called the Nexus, where time stands still.

But Soran's attempt to tap into the ribbon will destroy a planet inhabited by millions. Picard throws his ship into battle to stop the Duras sisters and both their ship and his are so badly damaged that both sides have to retreat to the surface of the planet.

Picard goes in pursuit of Soran while his crew seek ways of saving the children on the planet. Worf mentions that Klingon women are sexually aroused by danger and suggests that Lursa and B'Etor could be distracted at this time. Riker volunteers but Worf says he would not survive the encounter. Data seems ideally equipped for this problem. While he goes to distract the sisters the crew works on fixing shuttlecraft.

Instead of destroying the planet, Soran's efforts actually move it inside the Nexus. Picard still wants to stop him but needs help. Guinan says she knows just the man for the job. It is James Kirk (surprise) who has been held (ageless) in the Nexus all this time. He travels back in time with Picard to stop Soran beginning the assault on the energy ribbon. Picard kills Soran in the end, but Kirk is mortally wounded. He dies in Picard's arms, saying "It's been fun." Picard buries him and places a marker on his grave.

STEWART SPOOFS TREK ON SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE

Patrick Stewart has survived his February 5th appearance on SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE. He was having a grand time doing the show on stage before an audience and shifted into RSC mode — belting to the back rows in a manner a bit overpowering for television. Given the usual raunchy standards of the program it was not a terribly risque outing, but TNG fans not accustomed to the late night standards were a bit shocked with skits about an erotic bakery, Michael Jackson's 'image' problem and sex education for children. However, a skit casting Stewart as a 'Scottish Psychologist' was genuinely funny and he chewed up the stage as Lucifer heaping invective on his followers in another. The TREK skit though — there had to be one, right? — was not as memorable as either Shatner's get a life speech to nerdy Trekkies or the classic skit depicting the Enterprise as an orbiting restaurant.

For THE NEXT GENERATION they came up with a LOVE BOAT parody, with Geordi as the Bartender, Troi as social director, and Data as the naive purser. Stewart was a beaming Captain resplendent in a white uniform, who intoned that they were setting sail for romance. Rotund comic Chris Farley played Number One with a version of Riker's peculiar manner of walking out of a scene that was almost as odd as the real thing. The crew's mission on this particular voyage was to get Charo reunited with her Ferengi boyfriend after a spat. Only Security Officer Worf had trouble understanding the social functions of the cruise. In a surprise, the actor who played Doc on the actual LOVE BOAT series appeared to discuss his problems with Cardassians.

The other TREK element of the evening was Stewart's opening monologue, in which he claimed to be an expert on the original series and proceeded to dispense some highly fractured trivia to the audience.

• **William Shatner** and his second wife, Marcy Lafferty (who appeared in ST-TMP), have announced they are filing for an "amicable" divorce after 20 years of marriage. Lafferty said "life took us apart and it is time to move on."

Kathleen Toth

Americans Save Space Police?

Into space: Mentorn has teamed up with Space Police's (above) creator Gerry Anderson

MENTORN FILMS have won US backing for Space Police after the BBC withdrew funding last month, *reports Broadcast.*

US Syndicator Grove Television have agreed to underwrite the $30 million project, and Mentorn and Gerry Anderson have also formed a company, Space Productions, to exploit the possibilities of the series.

Prospects for SPACE POLICE now depend on response to the pilot at the NATPE syndication market, and on Mentorn finding a UK commision.

FEW NEW TOYS ON THE WAY

TOY FAIR REPORT

WITH DAPOL conspicuous by their absence, few WHO and SF-related toys were on display at this year's toy fair.

Vinyl figures of Tom Baker for skilled modellers (to match the already released Troughton) should soon be available from Amerang/Comet, with Jon Pertwee to come in May and a Delgado Master planned for the Autumn.

The much hyped trading cards are due by the end of February, but could be delayed by disputes over clearances. The first set of 110 cards (of three) containing randomly inserted Prism Cards will be available from specialist SF shops.

Vivid imaginations will be releasing more Gerry Anderson toys, including a 12 inch Captain Black and an electronic Angel Interceptor. A range of poseable 4" figures is already available, with a giant electronic SPV playset to come for Christmas, to coincide with a second BBC2 screening of the series. A limited range of JOE 90 toys will also be available for then.

Bandai UK will also be adding to their NEXT GENERATION range. American imports of recent figures (including TNG versions of Spock, Scotty and McCoy) are currently selling for around £13 in London shops, so collectors should find the UK range easier on their bank balances... A set of DS9 figures is also on the way, including a 'Nerys' — Playmates not knowing that Bajorans are known by their first name!

Sales of *Jurassic Park* toys should be boosted by a world-wide cinema rerelease prior to video this summer; extra footage will be included on the US laserdisc version. Disney's *Aladdin* will be available on video for Christmas, while the studio's latest film, *The Lion King* (which advance reports suggest will outstrip even *Aladdin*) will reach British cinemas in September, only three months after its US release.

MAKING OF HHGTTG UP FOR AWARD

Expanded Who documentary entering production

AFTER A DELAY caused by BBC Video head David Jackson's illness, the expanded video version of *Doctor Who - Thirty Years in the TARDIS* now has an official start date of March 1st. The video will run for at least two hours, and is unofficially planned for a September release.

Meanwhile kudos for director Kevin Davies has come with the nomination of *The Making of Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* video for a video entertainment award as best documentary. The results are announced on 18th February.

Production on the illustrated coffee-table *Guide*, based upon Douglas Adams' first novel, has begun, with Sue Moore beginning work on the Vogons and Martin Bower designing spaceships. Several star names are being canvassed to 'play' the lead roles, while Douglas Adams is now reported to be more hopeful about the *Guide* movie than he has been for several years. Former Monkee Mike Nesmith, now a notable video director is likely to make his major feature film debut on the project.

COMING UP FOR BABYLON 5

AFTER BABYLON 5's critically ill-received debut, *Midnight on the Firing Line*(*see news next issue*), up coming episodes include...

- *Soul Hunter* - A mysterious alien arrives aboard a damaged ship and other aliens start to leave the station out of fear that he has come for a soul.
- *Born to the Purple* - Londo's libido draws the Centauri into a compromising position.
- *Believers* - by David (*The Trouble with Tribbles*) Gerrold is said to be very intense. The B5 Doctor comes into conflict with alien beliefs
- *Infection* - The doctor is in trouble again amid a lot of explosions.
- *Mind War* - Walter Koenig visits B5 as a not so agreeable telepath.
- *A Sky Full of Stars* - Sinclair's mysterious past and the Battle of the Line are revisited.
- *Parliament of Dreams*
- *Survivors*
- *Grail*

FOX MAKES A MOVE

FOX NETWORK is not going to be left out of the science fiction trend either. Besides already renewing cult favourite X FILES (now running on Sky One) for a second season, despite low ratings, plans are afoot to do at least one ALIEN NATION film after that idea was shelved several years ago.

In addition, the network has tested the waters for a possible series called M.A.N.T.I.S. with a pilot film produced by Sam Raimi (*Darkman*) and written by Sam Hamm, writer for the first *Batman* film. And, indeed, M.A.N.T.I.S. seems to be a sort of socially-conscious Black Batman based in Ocean City, a thinly disguised Los Angeles.

Starring Carl Lumbly (CAGNEY AND LACEY) as Miles Hawkins, a world famous forensic scientist and millionaire inventor who seems utterly indifferent to the plight of the boys in the hood, M.A.N.T.I.S. introduces a hero who wears a strange helmet - complete with hypnotic lenses - and a concealed exo-skeleton that gives him great strength. He needs it because Hawkins is confined to a wheelchair. M.A.N.T.I.S. stands for Mechanically Augmented Neuro-Transmitter Interception System. In other words, when he's got the suit on, Hawkins can walk and kick serious butt as long as his power supply holds out.

Hawkins is a rather morose personality at the best of times - his former conservatism turning to secret rage when he was shot in the back and crippled by a policeman during a riot. He gradually comes to use information derived from a reporter played by Bobby Hosea and an assistant corner played by Gina Torres to expose corruption and racist plotting by the ambitious chief of police. Martial arts movie actor Steve James is also featured.

M.A.N.T.I.S. immobilises bad guys quite literally - he hits them with a dart or a spray full of a paralysing substance of his own invention that wears off and becomes undetectable after the criminals are hauled off to jail. He also drives an old car that transforms into a sleek flying machine with Cadillac tail fins, to the consternation of the police choppers. In keeping with the trend to high quality effects work even on a budget, the car and the suit look very good, as does an extended action sequence when M.A.N.T.I.S. dangles from the airborne car on a rope to run down a gang of skateboard riding thieves.

All of which sounds very tongue-in-cheek, but despite some highly comedic lines and the strange helmet, the tone is serious. At the end we get not a Bat Signal but cellular telephones delivered to key people with the note to "just dial M." And Fox may do just that.

Kathleen Toth

briefly...

•Two seaQuest novels, *Fire Below* by Matthew Costello and *The Ancient* by David Bischoff are available on import.

•The novelisations of the QUANTUM LEAP pilot (as *The Beginning*) and the episodes *Play It Again Seymour* and *A Portrait for Troian* (as *The Ghost and the Gumshoe*) have been reissued by Boxtree. Future QUANTUM LEAP books include *Knight of the Morning Star* by Melanie Rawn and Melissa Crandell's *Search and Rescue*. Following these will be Ashley McConnell's *Prelude*, which covers the period between *Too Close for Comfort* and Sam's first leap at the beginning of the pilot episode.

•Bravo are including adverts in their (out of order) AVENGERS screenings, but are running them at the 'correct' place in the prints.

•BBC Video are currently trying to decide whether there's sufficient interest in THE TRIPODS to make a video release worthwhile...

•BBC2 jumped forward slightly in their QUANTUM LEAP screenings, running *A Tale of Two Sweeties* early to avoid splitting *Trilogy* around the Winter Olympics.

Following their Kenedy season screening of *Lee Harvey Oswald* it begins to look like there's a LEAP fan at BBC2...

•The series based on "William Shatner's" TEK WAR books has debuted in the states with the first of four two hour TV movies. Directed by Shatner, it features a cameo appearance by William Gibson and guests stars Barry Morse (*Full report next issue*). Shatner is to guest star in an upcoming episode of SEAQUEST.

•PLANET OF THE APES debuted at 2.33 - one million more than WHO on Two - but has since slipped out of the C4's top thirty. Fourteen episodes of APES were made in all: *Escape from Tomorrow, The Trap, The Gladiators, The Legacy, The Cure, The Liberator, The Good Seeds, Tomorrows Tide, The Surgeon, The Deception, The Horse Race, The Interrogation, The Tyrant,* and *Up Above me,World So High.*

Archive Update...

Steve Roberts
London

I'm writing with reference to DWB122's statement that Adam Lee, head of the BBC Archives, insisted that a reversal of the original negative print of *Planet of the Daleks* be used for transmission to ensure the best picture quality.

It would be nice to think that Lee (actually the BBC's Archive Selector) had the power, or indeed the inclination, to insist which particular copy of a DOCTOR WHO episode was to be transmitted! This decision lies with either the relevant production department or BBC presentation.

Once the decision to reshow *Planet* had been confirmed, Ralph Montagu and myself approached Late Show Productions (who we occasionally work for) in order to ensure that the highest quality copies were transmitted. At the time, the producers were actually unaware that episode 3 only existed as a monochrome film recording, and were planning to transmit the 1" videotape copies held by the library. We convinced them to remaster the older 2" master tapes onto the digital D3 format for transmission, even though this meant spending a little more money. In the event, twice the normal transfer time had to be used, as the 2" tapes needed to be played through once before being copied, being prone to head clogs from loose oxide.

We then asked Adam Lee if he would be prepared to release the archived film recording negative so we could obtain the sharpest possible copy. As we are both members of a small team that carries out specialist restoration work for him, Adam knows us well enough to trust us to safely run negatives on a telecine, so he agreed. No 'reversal' was used, as mentioned in the news item - the film was the original camera negative. The reversal of the picture occurs within the electronics of the telecine. I think the results speak for themselves, and should silence those people who think that film recordings are always poor quality!

Incidentally, similar fan pressure was brought to bear in 1991, when it was decided to reshow *The Time Meddler*. THE LATE SHOW were unaware that the BBC's film prints of episodes 1 and 3 were cut, and that more complete prints existed in a private collection. The collector was only too pleased to lend his film, so a film copy extra sequence from episode 1 was made, and spliced in to the BBC print before it went to telecine. Adam Lee originally decided the missing sequence from episode 3 was so short that it wasn't worth getting the film copied but he changed his mind a couple of days before transmission and had the relevant section telecined and edited into a copy of the transmission tape. However, he didn't tell the LATE SHOW that he'd done it! Luckily, a chance comment from a colleague about a DOCTOR WHO VT dock that he'd spotted in an edit suite alerted me to this tape, and the day before transmission I managed to convince the Presentation Department to run the longer version instead. I suppose the point I'm trying to make is that usually a production department will take the cheapest and easiest route, not the one which provides the highest quality or most complete end result. Hopefully though, DOCTOR WHO at least will benefit from the influence that fans on the inside can bring to bear on the BBC.

A few other items were turned up during research for *Thirty Years in the TARDIS*, some of which didn't make it to the screen.

The first major discovery was a six second clip of exploding Daleks from *The Power of the Daleks 6*, part of which was shown. This was in a film about the Radiophonic Workshop. An edition of LATE NIGHT LINE UP from 1967 contained two clips of Yeti from (we think) *The Abominable Snowmen 4*. The first clip shows a group of Yeti escorting a man up a mountainside, the second is a quick zoom-in to the face of a Yeti standing by the TARDIS, which was used in the 'I was That Monster' vignette. These clips were within an interview with Jack Kine in the Visual Effects Department which also includes shots of DOCTOR WHO props in action, including *Tomb* cybermats running across the studio floor and a Yeti firing its gun at a Cyberman, whose head blows up as white foam oozes out! At one point Jack Kine demonstrates his personal favourite scary prop - a black doctor's bag which pulsates, supposedly containing a trapped human soul. Does anyone know what series this might be from? We also found Val Singleton making Dalek tea for two Daleks in the BLUE PETER studio — at the end they decide they don't like it, so it gets exterminated!

Several people have asked where the shot of the Yeti lumbering down the mountain is from — it's one of the original film inserts from *The Abominable Snowmen 2*. Whilst spooling through another Radiophonic Workshop film, I came across the cutting copy of a TOMORROW'S WORLD feature on the workshop which contained the opening minute of 1964's *The Caves of Steel*. This edition is held by the library, but the cutting copy has much more of *Caves* in it. It includes the murder scene, which is extremely graphic, as a man is shot by a ray gun and falls to the floor with smoke pouring from a huge hole in his chest!

During the production of the documentary, Adam Lee released both the archived print of *The Web of Fear 1* and the archived negative of *The Mind of Evil 1* to us — consequently pristine copies of both now exist on D3, as does the recently returned footage of the Daleks burning the forest of Kembel. The transfer of the *Mind* episode effectively means that all six episodes are easily available to UK Gold, should they wish to reshow the story, and they won't have to try and hack it together from the compilation again! Incidentally, a smoke overlay from episode 1 of *The Daleks' Master Plan* was used for smoke effects on a recent edition of THE CLOTHES SHOW!

Finally, the BBC has just started to transfer all 60,000 of its 2" videotapes onto D3, a process which will take five years. The advantage of D3 is that it is effectively transparent - there is no visible difference between the pictures from the master and those from the copy, unlike previous analogue systems. Two D3 copies of each tape are being made, after which the 2" tape is sent to the National Film Archive for storage — many DOCTOR WHO master tapes are already there. This will finally end the farcical situation where a production department calls for a VHS viewing copy of a programme, and the irreplaceable master tape is used solely to make the VHS! Incidentally, are you aware that UK Gold wipe their programmes after use, so if they want to show it in future, they have to play the master yet again? Some 2' tapes, including DOCTOR WHO episodes, are now so unstable that they may never play correctly again. It's not just the old ones either — *Arc of Infinity 1* was literally falling to bits as it was dubbed to D3. The move to D3 is fast becoming a race against time - one wonders how long it will be before the D3's themselves will need to be salvaged onto yet another format?

Loved the picture in DWB122 — all I needed was a flag, and it would have looked like I'd conquered Everest or something!

John Butcher
Hereford

The DWB Compendium archives article contained almost everything I have wanted to find out for ten years and more.

But there are still one or two points on which I would like clarification...

1)No source was given for *The Faceless Ones 1*. Was this inadvertently omitted from the list of episodes held by the BBC in 1978, or was it recovered later on. If so when and from where.

Ed: The Faceless Ones 1 was always held by the BBC, though an edited Australian copy appeared later leading to the belief that only an edited print survived.

2)The documentary *Thirty years in the TARDIS* included extracts from TALKBACK dated 26th September 1967. I had long believed that this programme was not recorded; however if it does exist and is complete, does it include the clips from *The Ed: Macra Terror* and *The Evil of the Daleks*.

As a careful study of the clip might hint, it actually comes from the TALKBACK of the following week, which referred to the previous edition's debate.

3)The brief feature on UNIT shown before *Planet of the Daleks 6* included some colour material from *The Mind of Evil 6* which was not mentioned in the article. Where did this come from and is there any more?

ED: About five minutes of colour material from The Mind of Evil was recorded privately off-air in America during the seventies, and this has been combined with the surviving film print as was done with the Daemons etc. But that's all that exists.

4)What soundtracks to missing episodes exist? One report I received says that all do except for *The Crusade - 1,2,4* and *Galaxy 4 - 1,3,4* and I would be grateful if you could confirm or deny this. Do all soundtracks come from private collections or were any held by the BBC, and if so, why?

ED: As far as I know, all surviving soundtracks, as used by the BBC Audio Collection, were privately recorded, and none were retained by the BBC (the BBC sound archives were, and remain, if anything more 'careless' than the TV library). Every episode from Mission to the Unknown onwards was recorded directly (electronically) from the TV, though The Myth Makers 3 is incomplete (other recordings were also made of stories such as Evil, so a complete version may exist). Marco Polo definitely exists, though perhaps only in dubious quality, as does some of Galaxy Four, including part three. Can anyone confirm the survival of the other seven episodes?

"NO EPISODES IN NEW ZEALAND"

Nigel Windsor
Auckland NZ

I read with interest the letter in DWB117 regarding missing episodes in New Zealand.

As an employee of Television New Zealand I would like to know on what "good authority" Peter Brierly has it that "TVNZ holds missing Hartnell & Troughton episodes on VZ2000 format."

Firstly I have never heard of the VZ2000 format. Assuming he means Video 2000, to my knowledge this has never been used at TVNZ. Any copies that were made for non-broadcast purposes (previewing by censor...) were made on low-band U-Matic, and shortly after the mastertape was played to air, the censor copy would be re-recorded over with a totally different programme. It is highly unlikely that any copies would still exist at this date. The only possibility is that someone borrowed the copies and never returned them, or that copies were somehow put aside and escaped the re-recording process.

Secondly, it seems there may well be some confusion between Video 2000 and Ampex 2000 broadcast quality 2" tapes. It is possible that the film prints supplied by BBC Enterprises were converted onto 2" videotape for TVNZ's operational requirements, but this is unlikely as the film prints were usually played straight to air from a telecine machine. Once the rights to screen the episodes had expired the prints were either destroyed, sent on to another broadcaster or returned to BBC Enterprises. It is highly unlikely that a respected and efficient broadcaster such as TVNZ would hold programmes for which it no longer held the rights.

TOPPING UNDER FIRE

Cath Anderson-Smith
Rochester

It's a mark of DWB's growing maturity that you're prepared to give both sides of the debate on controversial issues — Kate Orman's thought-provoking piece on JNT and Australian fandom, and the deliberately contrasting views on *The Green Death* are worthy of note.

A shame, then, that space precludes the same approach being taken with the books. A few issue ago Dave Owen and Helen Stirling wrote positive but generally fair reviews of what were, for my money, the two finest NEW ADVENTURES so far — *Bloodheat* and *the Dimension Riders*. Now Keith Topping uses the *Conundrum* review to express his dislike for these books. His snide comments about Daniel Blythe's novel being "boring and pretentious" are unfair and inaccurate — I read it straight through in about four hours, understood it perfectly (as did the original reviewer) and found it a fine amalgam of 'new' and traditional WHO. The fact that Keith finds space to praise Cornell — the most pretentious writer of them all! — is highly dubious, given the fact that they have worked together...

Des Marsden
Rotherham

I'm pleased to see your reviewers are enjoying the NEW ADVENTURES these days... *Conundrum* was certainly well written (even if the content smacked of 'rip-off') but Keith Topping could learn how to express a liking for something without denigrating other books! I found *Bloodheat* and *The Dimension Riders* far more enjoyable than any of last year's books, especially the latter, which combined thoughtfulness and action adventure in an almost perfect balance. I certainly didn't find any 'boring philosophy' in

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Daniel Blythe's book — just a clever plot and a hugely enjoyable read.

I'm reserving judgement on *No Future* but, to go by Cornell's previous efforts I'm preparing myself for the very worst of fanboy continuity and gratuitous pop group references.

Ed: It seemed sensible to leave Keith's comments about earlier books in as they would help readers to decide whether they shared his tastes, and were therefore likely to share his enthusiasm for Conundrum. Reviews have to be a matter of personal opinion and tastes, as the Alternate History Cycle has shown. In that (it turns out) Bloodheat, The Dimension Riders and Conundrum would all have had ***very*** *harsh reviews had the reviewers been 'shuffled' around a little...*

Duncan Steele
Aberdeen

Conundrum has proved to be the most entertaining NEW ADVENTURE since *Iceberg*. A riotous comedy and a darned good piece of DOCTOR WHO. A contender for the best NA of all time. But can anyone explain who built the Land of Fiction in the first place? The Black Guardian? Perhaps there's a novel in that.

Ed: I always liked the idea that the Land of Fiction was a natural phenomenon, which became dangerous when someone wrote a story about an all-powerful computer (which then of course came into being in the Land...) But No Future implies it has something to do with the Gods of Ragnarok.

MOSTLY DULL...

Ron Lilycropp
Victoria, Canada

Perhaps someone at DWB can answer a question for me: did Douglas Adams actually write his last book? I've just gotten around to reading *Mostly Harmless*, and I have to admit I found it difficult to believe that this was the same man who produced the original HITCH-HIKER'S GUIDE. If anything, it seemed like low-grade fan fiction - long on "continuity" and references to previous books, depressingly short on anything even resembling novelty or imagination ("Elvis-is-alive" jokes, for God's sake!). Then, on checking the publication data, I discovered that the book was copyrighted not to Adams, but to "Serious Productions Limited" - followed by a note announcing that Adams had asserted his legal right to be identified as the author... Is the man so creatively spent that he needs to hire ghost-writers? William Shatner I can forgive, but when someone is famous for actually being an author, and his name fills up the top quarter of the front of a book, I somewhat naively expect him to have, well, written the bit inside...

Ed:Doug Adams did write it (so far as we know!) The moral rights bit is simply the current form of the standard international copyright declaration (under the Berne convention, I believe), while crediting the copyright to a company gives various business advantages (including the option of sharing the revenue with relatives and loved ones). Check out Terry Pratchett's Discworld books for another example of this...

MORE ON SF & COMEDY

Stephen Trump
Upminster

I do seem to have inadvertently aroused a bit of controversy with my anti-RED DWARF letter in DWB120. I guess I went rather overboard on my personal dislike of the show and hence clouded the real point I was attempting to make. This being that the BBC cannot be bothered to produce DOCTOR WHO (forget *Dimensions in Time*) but they can be bothered to churn out series after series of RED DWARF. I'll wager that your good selves and my critic K J Park would, given the choice, rather see new DOCTOR WHO being produced than RED DWARF. By giving so much repeated exposure in DWB to RED DWARF it engenders to me a kind of "Oh well, so it's not the real thing but it's got spaceships and aliens in it so it will do" approach. My point is that being of a lighthearted nature, perhaps it should not be heralded with such prominence and regularity as, say, I would expect BLAKES 7 to be if it were the only current BBC SF output. I would also point out that I don't care much for ST-TNG but have no qualms about the considerable coverage given to that in DWB.

Finally, I must point out that I enjoy good comedy such as FAWLTY TOWERS and MONTY PYTHON and that for me life is far too short to take it seriously all the time. The biggest laugh I have ever had in DWB was your 'Alternative Making of *Silver Nemesis*' article (ref: DWB114). Some of the comments made in reviews also make for a chuckle with their cutting accuracy and perceptive outlook. Yours, off my high horse!

ANNIVERSARY SURVEY RESPONSE

Séan Harry
Bayswater, London

I have always found the results of the readers polls immensely interesting. I do however find it difficult to rate many DOCTOR WHO stories, as they were viewed with all the episodes in close succession, up to thirty years after the story was produced. Many DOCTOR WHO stories were made to be seen as a serial, and seem rather disjointed when viewed in one go, while others work even better. I also feel that the Hartnell stories haven't aged well, and while the basic premise of the story might be sound, the execution of *The Sensorites* or *The Web Planet* makes them incredibly boring by today's standards. I was, however pleasantly surprised by how good both *The Rescue* and *The Ark* were, and still find it hard to understand why these two have been forgotten by the fans, and not released on video.

Overall, I think that the seventies was the golden age for DOCTOR WHO, and that seasons 19 through to 24 represented the show's nadir. I also personally feel that Williams' tenure as producer was better than we credit him, and comparing seasons 15 and 16 with 17, it is obvious that Douglas Adams had more to do with its weaknesses than Williams. The recent release of *The Trial of a Time Lord* reminded me just how bad that story was.

Richard Kevern
Kingston

Good to see someone reappraising Doctors six and seven (DWB120 letters). It has become very easy to knock Messrs Baker and McCoy's eras in recent years, but as a regular viewer from seasons eight to nineteen, who lost contact with the programme till season twenty six, I have found it a pleasant surprise to catch up on much that I missed.

Colin Baker's charismatic and larger than life portrayal filled the central role admirably. One always knew he was 'the Doctor.' In many ways Colin's portrayal was the natural successor to Tom Baker's definitive (for most fans) Doctor four.

McCoy's performance, once he had grown into the role of the 'dark Doctor' by season twenty six, was always fascinating (although his attempts at anger left something to be desired), and again could be viewed as the natural development of Troughton's dark and often manipulative Doctor two.

Doctors two and four featured high in your poll, but perhaps if more people reappraised the later incarnations I might not be in the minority who voted Colin Baker my favourite Doctor.

Iain Short
Cleveland

The Web Planet slides way down the series survey polls. It really shows how video can kill magic, doesn't it?

As a faded memory the story had the reputation of a classic, a serial with no guest human characters, only aliens. It was written about alongside a few black and white stills of giant ants and other wondrous creatures. It stood out as something different, something bold.

As a child I read those articles and I longed to see the story. *The Web Planet* was the only video where I placed an advance order. Viewing the story for the first time I was disappointed.

I felt let down — an imagination simply doesn't have the limits of studio, costume, time and budget that Hartnell WHO had to work against. But isn't the production still something different from the rest of that era? Do production values really mean more to us than an inspired concept?

A solution. Take your video, put it back on the shelf and leave it there. Sixties production values for alien worlds and species just don't stand up to repeated nineties scrutiny.

I watched *The Web Planet* for the first time since its release last week. I loved it. Use your video only as an occasional reminder of the story and let your imagination get back to work. It was the story, the concept, that caught our attention all those years ago, and that story is still there and is still special, unique in thirty years of the series. Enjoy it.

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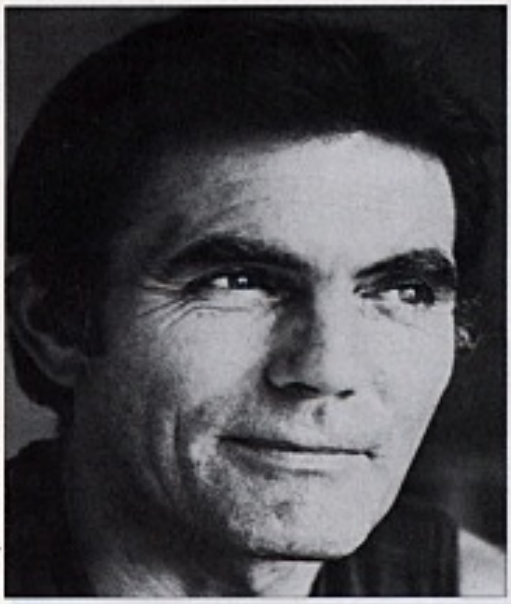
FROM ANDROZANI TO THE 24th CENTURY

Few actors can claim to have established successful careers on *both* sides of the Atlantic. *Maurice Roëves* is one such international jet-setter, with an awesome range of stage, television and film credits - including the Hollywood blockbuster *The Last of the Mohicans* - under his belt. With a recent episode of STAR TREK - THE NEXT GENERATION in the can, and exactly ten years since his role in one of the all-time DOCTOR WHO greats - *The Caves of Androzani* - was broadcast, Gary Leigh and Kevin Dunne met this immensely busy actor at Ealing Broadway, on February 3rd, to discuss his career...



Courtesy Maurice Roëves

WERE YOU born Maurice Roëves? It's a distinguished-sounding name.

It's pronounced 'Ro-Eaves'. Everyone says Reeves, even the Scots — I'll call the BBC over the TV thing I'm doing at the moment and say, "It's Maurice *Roëves*...", and they'll say, "Oh yes, Mr Reeves..."! The Americans aren't like that — they don't approach you until they've found out how to pronounce your name. They're so professional. It's Prussian - I should say Austrian - which is where my family, I assume, originally came from.

I was born in Sunderland. My family moved to Newcastle right away where I spent the first five years of my life, then my father got a big job with the same company in Glasgow so we moved up there. With two Scottish grandmothers, a Stuart and a Gordon, I had a lot of Scottish blood anyway. I've always related to Scotland, and despite being born in England I 'class' myself as Glaswegian.

How did you get into acting?

I went to drama college there. I'd ducked University, which I was heading towards, and didn't really know what I wanted to be. I went into the Army and did my National Service, and a little time training with the SAS. They wanted me to sign up, but I didn't think that was the career for me. Working with the SAS was one of the most important periods of my life, and everything I learnt from that I've used in my life ever since. They taught me to think for the first time, and they taught me a lot of stuff about myself that I didn't know.

Were you at all theatrical at that time?

No, not at all. My *father* was very theatrical; he loved the Wilson/Barrett company (a very prominent touring company). My mother was never that keen on that sort of stuff, so he would take me off to the Citizens' Theatre to see *A Tale of Two Cities* (I'll always remember that), the Olivier *Hamlet*, and so on.

By the time I came out my family had moved to a home of their own which was like heaven compared to the slum we had lived in (the house was OK but it had been right at the bottom of this 'ghetto'). I went to the local church and joined the drama club, where I helped out with stage management work like building sets. They were short of actors for the Christmas show they were doing, *Crown of Thorns* I think it was called, and needed someone to play the innkeeper, so I went home, underlined my sixteen lines and had them learnt by the next week. I remember the very first night; the smell of the scenery, the lights, and I thought, "*This* is what I want to do." And from then on I worked at it every night, with different amateur companies.

What was your big break?

Have I had a big break?! I haven't had one which has *really* established me — I'm an established actor but I'm not established, financially, with a big break which has brought in so much money that I can sit back and consider scripts. I still consider scripts and I turn things down, but I turn them down knowing that I'm going to be very poor!

If it's a major part - a guest starring part in a series which is hit and miss - I'd phone and say that I like the possibility of the role but that I think some of the dialogue's crap, and how would the writer feel about changing it? I wouldn't turn things down immediately but I'd say that I didn't think it was well written, and I'd see whether the director says, 'Forget it, just leave it', or whether he'd want to meet and talk about it. But I don't change the essence of the role. People like to typecast you, even in America, but I'm an actor and I can change. One of my golden rules is never to adapt the role to suit myself as it's my job to adapt myself to suit the role, which I do, sometimes to my great depression...

My acting career started in theatre. I won an award at the *Citizen's Theatre* (which is also where I made my directorial debut!) as an Acting ASM one September and got changed over to a full acting contract the following March when I played Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*. They offered me Graziano or Lorenzo, and I took the romantic one, to everyone's disbelief. Then all the schools came in to see us, and we got this amazing Beatle-like treatment. I'd heard about it, I'd heard them screaming away at the Beatles, but never when I was on stage! They'd be waiting for the moonlight scene, I'd come out and this *huge* scream, like a hand, came out and grabbed you! The first time I thought "What the hell was that!", thinking that my tights had burst or something, and I couldn't move — every time I moved there was a scream! We almost had to bring the curtain down! I was up for the lead in a big TV thing with Tony Selby called THE INQUISITORS and I turned it down because of that, thinking it was something about me which caused that effect, much to the chagrin of my agent who saw money flying out of the window (though the series eventually just fell apart).

Which medium do you prefer to work in?

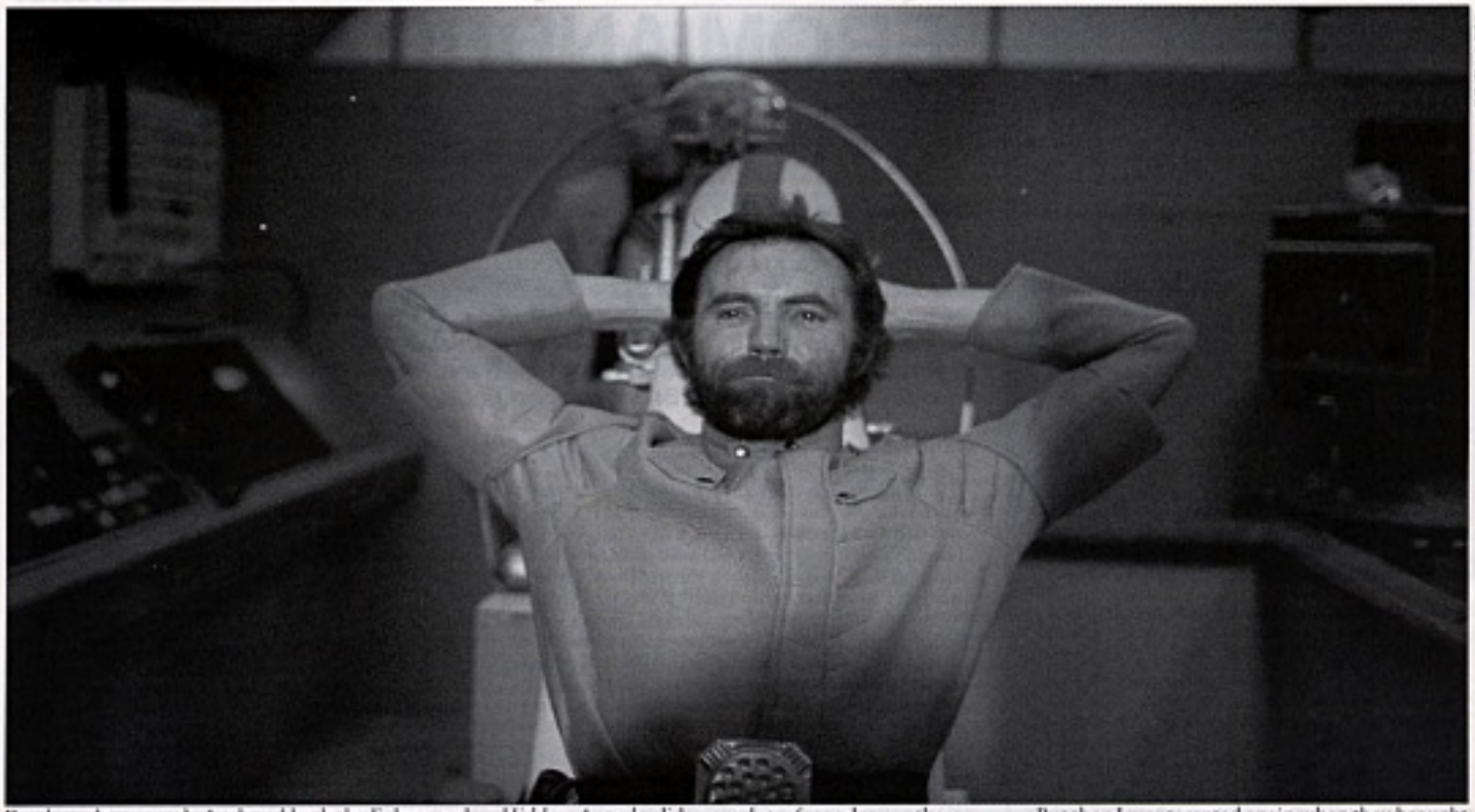
Stage and film. TV's OK if it's really well done. The DOCTOR WHO I did here (*The Caves of Androzani, 1984*) was fine. What Graeme [Harper] did in the studio was terrific, a wonderful job done professionally, but there are lots of people doing TV here who talk big and sound like they're shooting a movie, and they don't know about shooting movies. You can't shoot TV like a movie, there isn't the money to do it. They've never really done TV in the way it should be done (it's a pity that all these studios are lying empty when using them is what TV should be about). They rarely use the studio cameras properly, to my mind, which is why the studios are lying empty and everything's on film. Some of my most enjoyable work has been in *real* television; shot in the studio with all the cameras around.

You did a DOOMWATCH episode, *The Devil's Sweets* in 1970, playing an unethical psychologist which was studio television...

That was Robert Powell's first break, but I can't remember anything about it. It was something to do with badly tainted water, and I'd guess it was one of my first TV roles. I remember it was a good thing to do, it was a very popular series, but that's it.

The first TV I did was DR FINLAY'S CASEBOOK, for about fivepence! The first *major* role was a David Halliwell play, *Cock, Hen and Courting Pit*. It was Nicola Paggett's first major TV role, set in Yorkshire and very DH Lawrence (highly sexual), and made the front page of the *Daily Express* because of that. Later on I did *The Fighting Prince of Donegal* for Disney in Hollywood and James Joyce's *Ulysses* on film. Then an Irish play for TV, *Philadelphia Here I Come*, with Philip Lowry who'd just come out of CORONATION STREET playing Dennis Tanner. We played the same role (he was the private side, the spirit, and I was his public face), and we were the first actors to be nominated for the same award for the same role. Leonard Rossiter got it, though, for playing Hitler.

You've played Hitler haven't you?



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I'm the only actor who's played both the Fuhrer and the Deputy Fuhrer; Hitler *and* Hess! I was Hitler for a big BBC TV presentation, THE DIARIES OF BRIDGET HITLER, which was supposedly based in fact. Hitler disappeared before the war started and they believe he was in Liverpool, where his brother lived after marrying a local girl. Philip Savile directed using a new machine which did superimposition onto superimposition. It was very Brechtian in that they'd cut from shots of Hitler giving speeches in black and white to the studio, in colour, and then cut back to me (in black and white) doing the speech in German, and then everything would dissolve into colour again. I'd come down asking for my cigarettes and make up, we'd walk across the floor chatting, and suddenly on the scenery you'd get a superimposition of Auschwitz with all those horrible images going around. I just can't believe that it's never been shown again. Though there was a lot of pre-publicity there were no reviews, I think because no-one knew how to review it.

You're now an international jet-setting actor with homes in Britain and LA. How did that come about?

After I'd finished the Hitler I got very depressed. I'd spent a year of my life on that part, researching it and reading up on Nazism so I could get into the mind of this guy. I watched video upon video of concentration camps and videos of Hitler so that I could find his voice. Most of his stuff is just screaming and shouting — it's difficult to find any film of him just talking. But I found one bit where he was talking normally, and he had a very deep, attractive voice. Anyway, by the time I finished I was screwed up, I'd become Hitler and no-one wanted to know me. I was very disappointed because I thought I'd done some good work and no response was coming in, and I thought "Screw this country." I got very drunk one night, packed a case and woke up in a motel room on Sunset Strip in LA, thinking "What have I done! Never mind, I've just got to get down to it," which I did, and it was no different to going from Glasgow to London the first time. I was offered Hess in *Inside the Third Reich*, which wasn't as bad as Hitler. I remember standing behind Derek Jacobi and saying, "Very difficult, Derek, isn't it?", and he's standing in his German uniform saying, "Shut up", because he knew I'd just done his part!

MAGNUM was the second job I did over there and was great [*Holmes is Where the Heart is*, featuring Patrick Macnee as Sherlock Holmes] — my first trip to Hawaii, but those are just pocket money jobs. *Hidden Agenda* did me a lot of good over there, whereas none of the roles I've ever played over here have, to my knowledge. TUTTI FRUTTI, the rock and roll thing with Robbie Coltrane, Emma Thompson and Richard Wilson, was a huge success, and I could see that the role I had - Vincent, who sets himself on fire at the end - was a winner. When Emma and Robbie were up for the BAFTAs I refused to go, initially, because the other two members of the [rock] group weren't invited, and I thought we were a team and that they should have been there. But I was forced to go and, to this day, I wish that I hadn't, it was embarrassing. Everyone was coming up and asking me. "How come you're not nominated..." After that my wife asked me if I was coming back [to America] and I said I thought I'd better stay, because of TUTTI FRUTTI's success. And then I didn't get another interview for ten months, so I thought "I've got to go home, I've got a life there..."

There was talk of a second series...

Well, I wouldn't have done that. The number of times I've been asked in the street why you can't get it on video. It was described as the best thing of the decade, got a record number of BAFTA nominations, and yet you can't get it on video, and the BBC never sold it abroad! Maybe it was political because the BBC's flagship drama that year, FORTUNES OF WAR, didn't get anywhere, whereas this little Rock and Roll thing from BBC Scotland... I'm not bitter about it.

I'm happy to go back to the States and do all the pocket money jobs like MAGNUM and an episode of BAYWATCH, which I did recently, because all the residuals from them will be coming in after I die - I still get residuals from MAGNUM, which was twelve years back - and into my daughter's account!

I did the BAYWATCH to pay the rent, and it was wonderful! I'd gone in about an new Indian series called BROKEN CHAIN, and they said "We're not casting that yet, we'll put you up for it, and in the meantime have a look at this BAYWATCH." I was doing this high class European villain, and while everybody else is in swimming costumes I was in a three piece suit and a tie, when a hundred degrees on the beach.

There're all beautiful lassies - though none of them, the extras, are actors. They just queue up and get a part. But the Americans can't understand it, because it was cancelled over there and only revived because of its European popularity. David Hasselhoff is so big in Germany - he's singing, and he's almost the Elvis of Germany.

But then I was tempted again when they brought me back to Britain for BOOKIE, which got 7 million viewers, good reviews, yet they dropped it after a pilot run of three, and it was ten months again before I got an interview here. So, I was off back to the States again and got Colonel Munro in LAST OF THE MOHICANS, which was terrific, and that *did* push my head through the crowds. The end was horrendous to shoot with all those extras, who were brilliant.

It was my thirteenth film, but the first really commercial role. The only problem with it was I couldn't get them to do a shot without my wig. I had my hair pinned up with so much iron under the white wig that if I'd been hit by a bolt of lightning I'd've been nothing but ash! But as soon as you've got a wig on people think "Character Actor", and nobody recognises you from the movie because of it.

Backtracking slightly, how did you come to work with Douglas Camfield on the BBC serial, THE NIGHTMARE MAN in 1981?

I first worked with Douglas Camfield on DANGER UXB. He did the one where we were taken on holiday to Cromer [*The Pier, 26/3/79*]. It's supposed to be the healthiest place in Britain yet you nearly get knocked down by all the wheelchairs! I really liked Douglas and had dinner with him a couple of times after that, then the next time we worked together, on NIGHTMARE MAN, the first thing we did was have a big fight! I played the Chief Inspector, and the opening scene of the script was a walkdown on the pierside — here comes Mr. Plod, the Chief Inspector, down the street. I said, "I don't want to do that. It's like Noddy-land. There was no character work, so I said, "Let's give him some character. Let me put a tracksuit on and run in it — there's no reason why he shouldn't keep fit, and it'll be surprising and more interesting if that figure comes down the street and you suddenly hear 'Hi, Chief Inspector'." And finally Douglas agreed and did that opening shot, then showed him getting showered and into uniform, which made it much more interesting. After that he trusted me.

That was written by Robert Holmes, who also wrote *The Caves of Androzani*.

Did he? I didn't realise that. The one whose writer I can remember was SCOTCH ON THE ROCKS [a borderline telefantasy political thriller about Scots Independance shown in 1975] which was written by Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary! It's been wiped since because it was all about Scottish Nationalism and the Scotch rising up. The Sunday Post tried to do

a big article on it and I told them I could tell them a few things but that they couldn't quote me, just use it anonymously, but they never got anything on it out of the Government.

Douglas was great because he was an editor, but that was also frightening because he never did a mastershot. Everything was cut-ins, so you thought 'Where does this link up?' He had it all cut in his head, which worked, but there must have been times when it didn't work. He must have worked with a special brand of editors who knew him and how to cope with that. Graeme Harper was also a bit like that.

Which leads nicely on to *The Caves of Androzani*...

Graeme approached me and gave me the script, which I obviously liked or else I wouldn't have done it. He wanted me for Stotz, the leader of the gang. As I said earlier, I only do things that I'm really keen on doing, unless it's something like BAYWATCH where they pay me an awful lot of money and where I still do my best.

***Androzani* was very gritty and violent. Did you relish that aspect of it?**

Well as Stotz I enjoyed it, absolutely. As me I did in that if it's a job I'm really looking forward to doing, where I can use my inventiveness and imagination I get a great kick out of it. But I don't particularly enjoy it for being that sort of part. If you get a love scene, which I very rarely do, you're very busy trying to hit marks, and it's the same with violent scenes, in that I remember that the fight with Krelper had very tight marks for all the shots through the legs. Enjoying it is just part of the acting, and Stotz would enjoy it, he was one of those characters, which is why I said we should have no chat when he goes back to kill Krelper and the other gunrunner. There was dialogue originally, about why they should die, and I said we should forget that and just have Stotz turn back and kill them outright, because he was like that.

Was working on *Androzani* hectic?

It didn't seem to be, except when we were in the studio running out of time after a lot of problems with the rocks. That was one of the final scenes and Graeme managed to get more time and we eventually finished it. I didn't find the schedule a problem at all. I've done a bit of editing myself and it's a very exciting occupation I think, very creative.

You've worked with him again since, haven't you?

On an episode of B'Stard (THE NEW STATESMAN - *Natural Selection*), which was real fun. Graeme was the reason I did it, because I like him. I hung myself at the end after trying to get into Parliament by throwing B'Stard out and having an affair with his wife.

How memorable a part of your career was *Androzani*? It's very highly rated by telefantasy fans...

I remember enjoying doing it, and being surprised when someone rang to say that I'd been voted second best villain of the year. Like nearly everything you do, it's an investment. I've run into people, who've become writers and directors, who've said, "I remember you from *The Caves of Androzani*." Ten years later someone's going to employ you who was a kid when they saw it, that's what's great about it, but it wasn't a big memorable thing. I remember a few things about it, like Graeme being tremendous in letting me shoot the guys without doing all the speeches, which I thought would be very effective, and the shots through the legs, but it seems a lot more than ten years ago.

Had you watched the series before?

I'd watched some of it. In fact there was one episode I couldn't watch which I thought was horrible — something to do with ivy (*The Seeds of Doom*). I remember thinking this is a bit horrible for kids. It was like *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, where I almost ran out of the cinema.

I want to play Doctor Who. I'd love to do it. I said to the producer, John Nathan Turner, that if he ever decided to do Doctor Who with a slightly Scots accent (James Bond-style), "I'm your man." I'd play it a bit like a character I did years ago in a series called SCOBIE AND SEPTEMBER, about an artist who was almost an adult Just William character. Hannah Gordon was my wife and he was always getting into trouble, meeting bad guys and murderers by accident and screwing things up.

How else would you approach it?

It would depend how they wrote the role, of course. In this sort of role the closer it is to you, in some respects, the better. Of course, the hardest part to play is yourself. It would have to have some kind of humour in it, as although I play a lot of heavies I love comedy — there was a lot of humour in TUTTI FRUTTI's Vincent, but it was straightfaced, situational comedy.

Could you see yourself running around with a question mark brolly?

[*Laughs*] I don't see why not — I've got an umbrella with me today! I don't think it should be too silly as the kids relate to the character and what he's like and they get involved with that. If they wanted stuff like that then it would have to flow from how he's developed once I'd worked on the script with the directors, the writers and the producers. I hope I'd make a very interesting DOCTOR WHO, but if Speilberg's got the final say then who knows who we'll get? I have been up to his place, Amblin, to interview for a part (I didn't get it), and it's incredible, this very friendly, Mexican hacienda.

You did a NEXT GENERATION episode, *The Chase*, recently...

I actually had to read for that, even though it was only half a dozen lines at the end after I'd been undercover - cloaked is, I think, the word for it - throughout. I knew one of the casting people, Sheila Guthrie, and she phoned me up and said, "We're having a problem with this, because he's a different Romulan from any other kind of Romulan that's been in it before." So I got the script, thought 'Not much in it, two wee scenes at the end', but they were the most important scenes. The Romulans come out, having been there all the time, wanting a share of the genetic thing, and Picard works out how to make this hologram from another civilisation appear. The woman who played it we all thought was terrific. She gave this speech about peace, and how she knows that all of us - the Romulans, the humans and the guys with the odd foreheads - were modelled in her image. Then the Klingon says, "If she were here now, I'd kill her", and we all disappear.

Then Patrick's sitting, staring at his TV screen in a moral dilemma, as usual, wondering what the world's about, and I come through to tell him that we're moving off now and add, "Perhaps we are more alike than we think." That makes 'me' the first Romulan to show any sort of trust to a human, and there was talk about this character coming back again to take that on further, but nothing's happened yet. They couldn't get anyone to do this last little speech as they wanted it, it needed a good actor, so they gave me the full whack as if I'd done the whole episode, and a single card credit!

The part involved a lot of make-up...

You're up at two o'clock in the morning, in the chair at three o'clock and don't get out till six o'clock when you film. It's a *real* make-up job. You just sit there and sleep most of the time and then you wake suddenly to see yourself looking like Leonard Nimoy — a carbon copy of him! But I'd gone through that when I did a TV movie called TRIANGLE where I played three characters. I was a photographer going round these flats imagining all the people who lived there, and I played them all, including one who was 86. That was the first time I had a full, three hour make-up job, and when I woke up and saw myself I almost threw up — the make-up artist had done such a good job. After that I was used to it.

Did you get on well with the rest of the cast?

Well, Patrick wouldn't leave me alone because he'd been up for my role in MOHICANS and hadn't got it. He'd come out almost in tears because Michael Mann had given him such a hard time. He was pleased for me, though, he's not the sort of person who 'bears grudges' over that sort of thing! I took my two god-daughters to see him do *A Christmas Carol* in London recently and was going to take them in to see him, but we came out and saw the masses around the stage door and just said, "Forget it, we're not even going to try." But he was lovely.

The working atmosphere was very good. It depends on your director and producer of course, but I remember DOCTOR WHO also being very friendly. I like to play the clown on set (depending on the sort of role, of course, and how focused you have to be on it), because if everyone's enjoying themselves they work better.

STAR TREK is produced on a far grander scale compared with DOCTOR WHO — a bit like comparing an abacus to a calculator?

A little bit, but that would be unfair to the BBC. Things are much slicker out there — they work quicker and they film quicker. Whereas we would take two weeks, three weeks to shoot a DOCTOR WHO, they would do it in a week, or ten days. When you go into the studio everything's fixed and arranged and everything works — there's no wasting time, and no teabreaks. There're just tables all round the room with coffee and sandwiches available all the time. And there's no drink on set, no drink allowed anywhere, whereas over here at lunchbreak it's woosh, down the pub. And then in the afternoon things slow down.

What are you doing now?

I'm doing THE NEGOTIATOR, a two-hour BBC pilot which they hope to follow up with five more next year. It's a TAGGERT-type script, a detective story which ends up dragging in MI5 and MI6. Cox is The Negotiator, this puritanical John Knox character who's having to retire because he's getting the warnings of heart attacks, but doesn't want to do so because he loves the streets. And there's this strange character who I played, called Eddie Geminal, who was pretty high up in the Glasgow underworld, and Cox's character put him away for six years. When he came out after four, Cox, who kind of liked this guy, helped him to start up a business. Within ten years my character is a multi-millionaire, with connections to the stock exchanges and the mafia over the world, but while he walks a close line he's legit. He's not got many scenes in the first episode but they want him for the rest, which should be shot all over the world.

What would be your ultimate role?

I've already played my ultimate role, Iago in *Othello*, though very few people saw it. I'd like to do Macbeth again, and I'd like to do Lear in the next few years, before my energy levels go down.

Maurice Roëves, thank you very much.

PARAMOUNT

It's the End of the World as we know it...

Peter Linford considers SURVIVORS' place in the post holocaust genre...

ACCORDING TO REM it begins with an earthquake. SURVIVORS doesn't and nor, as it happens, does anyone feel fine (except in Garland's War but never mind that now). Had it done things would have been very different, but by and large whatever manner of disaster befalls mankind the survivor's concerns are likely to be the same. It is perhaps a consequence of this inherent limitation that the genre, popularly known as the Cosy Catastrophe, though of long standing, has been something lacking in prominence.

The responses and relationships of those fortunate or otherwise to survive the disaster are another matter. When John Wyndham wrote *The Day of the Triffids* he envisaged a cooperative mankind working together to overcome adversity. When, shortly afterwards, John Christopher wrote the less well known but rather more powerful novel *The Death of Grass* he told a much more pessimistic story of men falling to battle among themselves, of failure and of probably terminal collapse. George Lucas' undervalued film Slipstream takes a step forward beyond the immediate calamity to look at what stability might George Lucas' undervalued film *Slipstream* takes a step forward beyond the immediate calamity to look at what stability might emerge in time, and there are many other comparable explorations.

SURVIVORS, a series of three seasons from 1975, treads a fairly derivative middle ground; that is until it has established itself sufficiently to degenerate into what is basically a soap opera. Quite clearly a thirteen episode series would have had difficulty maintaining an immediately post-apocalyptic narrative without becoming desperately slow and ponderous, and for the truth of this note that the first few episodes of the series are indeed just that. Terry Nation had wanted to tell a story about hope and courage, but there is precious little of either in the early instalments. It is some time before the lead characters have met and got to know each other and are allowed to settle down and build a community. Before then a series of failed attempts and disheartening encounters dog them and the series to the extent that we wonder whether they ever achieve anything at all. When they do finally settle calamity upon calamity then continues to hold them back.

The unwillingness of the core group to settle down is a result of lead character Abby Grant's desire to find her son. This quest narrative is familiar and obvious in apocalypse stories. In any situation of bereavement relatives can be expected to come forward in greater, perhaps hypocritical numbers than usual. In a situation of total bereavement such as this the familiar pattern is as disrupted as anything else. The lack of certainty over whether one's relatives are alive or not provides an inbuilt narrative motivation: the desire to out, the quest. In SURVIVORS this motivation is used but also bypassed. Abby is the only one whose family is relevant. Greg's meeting with his wife's corpse is a device to explain his lack of interest in a family, but also to distract attention from any other relatives he might have had. The body of his wife stands in for his whole family. Jenny's family are not mentioned at all, which is why, when she and Greg fall in love (not that they ever appear to do so but it is taken that they have) we accept it without objection.

Wyndham too uses this device, and also the quest narrative though this takes a slightly different form. A brief encounter with Jo's Triffidated family writes that side of things out and Bill's only relevant relatives are dead before the story starts. Having established their relationship Wyndham then separates them both from the formative group and each other. This twofold search provides the basis for the rest of the book. (Naturally it is Bill who must find Jo not vice versa; it must be said that *Triffids* is hopelessly sexist.) Eventually all are reunited and Bill and Jo live precariously ever after. In *The Death of Grass* the search for family is a self-serving one. The interest is not in founding a link but in finding a refuge. When John gets to his brother David's enclave he and his party are denied entrance. The brother in question is shot for his pains and John and co. take over. *The Death of Grass* is not hot on optimism.

As a (supposedly) blockbuster film *Slipstream* has unrequited love at its core and therefore lacks familial interest. Bill Paxton forms the third side of a love triangle and, just for once, lead character Mark Hamill, rather than getting the girl, gets blown to bits.

The French film *Malevil* traps its central family together and no quest is involved. However it does raise another issue which is largely skipped in SURVIVORS; that of authority. In the series' opening episode the wisdom figure (He Who Explains the Situation) observes that although a State of Emergency was declared no-one remained to enforce it. The leaders, he says, died along with everyone else. In *Malevil* additional tension is provided by the trapping of the town's mayor with the other survivors. Does his authority survive with him? SURVIVORS' Arthur Woomley (George Baker) attempes, with some success, to use his remembered authority, and his cronies dog Abby and co. for some episodes thereafter. Woomley's approach is summary justice. Overstep the mark and you'll never step anywhere again. This approach is portrayed as being, ipso facto, a Bad Thing.

Which is fair enough, but he is addressing the problem, albeit badly. Abby's response to the theorising of He Who Explains the Situation is to say "Yes, well I must go" which is less than helpful. Whether the community that she and Greg later establish would have been up to providing long-term survival isn't known. In time Greg sees that community, and the later one at White Cross, as staging posts on the way to a wider society to be established once the smaller ones are more settled. His task is made easier by the fact that once the Death is passed no further comparable general threat exists. In other apocalypse scenarios this is less the case. Certainly in *The Day of the Triffids* the eponymous plants take over as the threat from the blindness and following plague. It is interesting to note on this front that their participation in the story is minimal right up until the final three or four chapters. Their's is a brooding presence throughout, but the emphasis is on the problem of survival. One could be forgiven for thinking that they were added to the book at a later stage to make it more distinct from its apocalyptic peers. Wise to this Douglas Livingstone, when adapting the novel for the BBC, sprinkled several extra Triffid attack scenes throughout the story (but curiously abbreviated Bill and Jo's battle with the problem into the final episode). At any rate the additional Triffid threat makes the eventual human response quite different from that in the Nation series. It is clear that with them about no simple network of communities is going to be viable. At the end therefore the emphasis shifts from human survival to the destruction of the Triffids (which does, okay, come down to the same thing). Similarly *Slipstream* presents the humans not only with a reduced population but a changed environment. There are, as usual, less people about but the world they have to live in has also been altered by the calamity. In SURVIVORS this is not the case. The Death by its nature is a transitory accident. It came and went and the world, though short on people, is just as it was before. The SURVIVORS' exercise is one in rebuilding. They have survived, and must go on. The survivors in *Triffids* are continuing to survive and must build a new world according to the circumstances.

Now it is a feature of all apocalypse stories that the principle group, whose survival strategy is the centre of attention (and implicitly approval) encounters on its travels others of different opinion. In his search for Jo and the Beadley party Bill comes across a number of groups holding out against the Triffids and each other, all with different survival strategies, including a group who have placed their trust in the Lord. Needless to say this does not impress Bill or his friend Jack Coker (played in the BBC adaptation by the late Maurice Colbourne) and it clearly did not impress Terry Nation either. Just as the religious community founded by Miss Durrant gets nobbled by both a plague and Triffids (although it is fairly clear that their demise has as much to do with their being women and therefore ill equipped to face either problem; *Triffids* really is hopelessly sexist), so the community in *Gone to the Angels* gets wiped out by the Death, which Abby and Co. now carry.

The Lord's absence in SURVIVORS is something of an oversight on Nation's part. It is in the nature of people that while they ignore God for most of the time, when trouble strikes they call on Him very readily, yet He is almost never mentioned in SURVIVORS. *Gone to the Angels* is to some extent the token God episode which enables the series to ignore this aspect. When a priest later joins the community in By Bread Alone he is one of the large number of passing characters who meet the Lord fairly soon after appearing. The religious response in SURVIVORS then is in the manner of many problematic others the community has to deal with.

But it was not always so. In his classic novel *A Canticle for Leibowitz* (which as a post nuclear holocaust story really falls outside this article's remit) Walter Miller Jnr posits a group of monks surviving, they believe, in order to preserve human science. The order is rather off beam as far as Christianity is concerned, but is making a religious response nonetheless. On the same front it is interesting to note that in the American TV Movie *The Day After*, which won itself a high profile screening during the nuclear paranoia of the early 1980s which also spawned EDGE OF DARKNESS and the Barry Hines play THREADS, a Christian response was also granted, in this case as the closing moment of the film. Two radiation-struck survivors find no other answer than to hold to each other in prayer. In *Slipstream* a whole new kind of religious fervour develops around the Slipstream itself (the Slipstream being the cleansing wind that comes over the earth after the environmental collapse). Android Bob Peck, hammered by the critics for looking too much like an insurance salesman, begins to find his soul at the Wind Cult, a community of people who, while perhaps not exactly worshipping the Slipstream are showing signs of confusion over what they should and shouldn't deify. Peck's developing humanity is cut off abruptly when Mark Hamill sails in and starts shooting people, in particular the woman who has been helping to find Peck's soul for him. In some respects this is just as well because he was on the road to anatomical problems, but it is a moving moment nonetheless.

If the android's journey was to find his soul, possibly at the mysterious place in the mountains that he repeatedly mentions, Hamill's is unexpectedly just as spiritual. He doesn't realise it until the very end, but as their Optica is about to hit the mountainside, he observes to Peck: "I put out my hand and touched the face of God". Hamill meets his maker, and while Peck can never meet his outside this world the film leaves open the possibility that he will find his own

solution. Now we may be stretching things here, since Hamill's problems are as much to do with his own personal situation as the wider one, but the line is clearly a peripateia. For Hamill to offer himself to God at the end is probably a more realistic response than most of the dying that goes on in SURVIVORS, but it is not entirely clear that he is doing so. Within the film both he and Peck are seeking their own meaning. As the android is longing for a community of other androids who exist for themselves it is possible that Hamill ends up finding meaning himself. The line is remarkably reminiscent of a passage in the Egoist philosopher Ayn Rand's *Anthem*: "And now I see the face of god, and I raise this god over the earth, this god whom men have sought since men came into being, this god who will grant them joy and peace and pride. This god, this one word: I." So Hamill's is not a Christian response and in the light of this his declaration makes a lot more sense.

However, with a bit of imagination you could take Paul's unintended self-sacrifice in *Greater Love* as a Christian act. The community in *Gone to the Angels* would be expected to do an "into thy hands routine..." and do not disappoint. They see the Death as being sent by God, though they never give a reason. Miss Durrant's community in *Triffids* don't go that far, but do see it as an opportunity to refound society on Christian principles. In SURVIVORS these, like the Queensbury rules that Knox dismisses in Garland's War are seen as standards now made obsolete. The priest Lewis believes that his collar should be enough to give him safe passage but is disabused (fatally).

Aside from this there seems to be widespread agreement in the genre that new standards will emerge, and those that do are often on militaristic lines. The Emergency Council in *Triffids* enforces its principles with guns, and in spite of his best efforts to avoid becoming brutalised Greg concedes no alternative but to shoot Barney when they wrongly believe that he is guilty of murder. The standards that develop later concede that the real killer must be spared on the grounds that the community can't afford to lose any more people. (SURVIVORS gets through its characters fairly quickly but three an episode would have been overdoing it.) Knox' declaration that the only rules in survival are to do what is expedient seem to hold good. In *The Death of Grass* this is taken further. The line between justice and revenge is very blurred. Pirrie claims that it is his right to shoot his wife because she has been cheating on him. This is accepted and he is allowed to do so. Similarly Anne is allowed to waste the men who abducted and tried to rape her daughter, but no distinction is made between this and the killing en route of numerous inconvenient persons who have committed no other crime than to be in the way, ending with John's own brother.

©BBC Video

No fratricide in SURVIVORS, but lots of gunfire. It is curious, however, that in all these stories the survivors arm themselves with shotguns when there's plenty of far more powerful automatic weaponry lying about. Communities set up in country houses would be much better defended with machine guns than shot guns. Might as well try to defend a tent with a pea shooter...

The most recent post-apocalypse tale was a comedy. NOT WITH A BANG spoofed SURVIVORS quite blatantly. The seventies series' title sequence opens with a scientist dropping a flask. The sort-of-plague in NOT WITH A BANG is caused by Judith Hann doing the same. The comedy series however did not catch on and it may be that the genre has worn itself out. SURVIVORS was borne out of the same self-sufficiency era that gave rise to THE GOOD LIFE (in, as it happens, the same year) and that has passed. Like BLAKE'S 7, which replaced it, SURVIVORS was fantastically popular in its day, but unlike the enduringly popular SF genre, it may prove to have been a child of its time.

Peter Linford

SPACESCAPES

Stephen J Brand explains the background to a new series of limited edition prints based on the WHO concepts of THUNDERBIRDS, DOCTOR WHO and BLAKE'S 7 FX designer Ian Scoones...

I FIRST met Ian Scoones in the summer of 1993, and we soon became good friends. His distinguished career has spanned over 30 years in Film and Television working as a special effects designer. From cutting his teeth as an assistant on films such as *Kiss of the Vampire* for Hammer in the mid sixties to supervising more recent movies such as 1984 and *A Prayer for the Dying*, Ian has built up a large collection of drawings, sketches, models and special props.

Some of his best known work was created after entering the BBC Visual Effects Unit in 1970. He worked on many DOCTOR WHO stories and exploited the opportunity to bring to the BBC his experience of filming model sequences with miniature space-craft and spacescapes. Much of his expertise in this field was due to the influence of Derek Meddings when Ian worked for him as a director on Gerry Anderson's THUNDERBIRDS.

DOCTOR WHO stories which show most sign of the Scoones influence are *The Curse of Peladon*, *Planet of the Spiders*, *Pyramids of Mars*, *The Invisible Enemy* and *City of Death*.

Later that year, we discussed the feasibility of releasing a number of Ian's sketches to collectors and DOCTOR WHO fans worldwide. Over the years many articles have been written about Ian's career, and well respected writers such as Jeremy Bentham and Gary Leigh had suggested publication of Ian's artwork.

We set aside a full day in November to wading through Ian's many catalogues and files, full of his sketches and drawings. After many hours of deliberation, we managed to select six which were most suitable for transformation from basic sketches into full colour paintings.

Ian began work in December and finished in January 1994. Unfortunately we were only able to use five of the six. The 'lost' painting, two Daleks in front of a demolished Big Ben, had to be dropped due to copyright technicalities. It was inspired by a 3-D model which Ian built for the recent DOCTOR WHO exhibition in Bristol.

The five paintings are as follows:

ONE: Jagaroth spaceship on the prehistoric Earth landscape — *City of Death*.

TWO: The prehistoric Earth landscape — as conceived for the above.

THREE: Earth shuttle landing at the Titan base — *The Invisible Enemy*.

FOUR: The Citadel of Mount Megeshra — *The Curse of Peladon*.

FIVE: The Queen Spider, the Great One, in her throne room — the nerve centre of Metebelis Three — *Planet of the Spiders*.

It was decided that we would only release a limited number of high quality full colour prints of each picture. Each print would be restricted to 2,000 copies worldwide, signed and numbered by Ian, and would come with a certificate of authenticity, again signed and numbered by Ian. The original paintings are 25.5" x 20.5" (648mm x 521mm) and, as we wished to keep the prints as close to this size as possible they will be 23" x 17" (584mm x 432mm).

The cost is expected to be in the region of fifty pounds per print, with a reduction when all five prints are purchased together. We hope to release the set in the very near future and are already receiving a great deal of interest.

We will operate on a strict 'first come, first served' basis, therefore we cannot guarantee to fulfil orders indefinitely. Obviously, those wishing to obtain low numbered prints should apply as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

All enquiries (with SAE) should be addressed to :-
Spacescapes, SJB Enterprises, 1 Westhill Close, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1LJ.

THE DEADLY ASSASSINS

In a follow-up to his recent *Spectator* article, George Lucas describes the lay-fan's perspective on the anniversary celebrations, and the prospects for DOCTOR WHO...

AS THE SAYING might have gone, there are those who are naturally ignominious, those who become ignominious, and a choice few who actively seek ignominy by the skipload. In allowing the much hyped "30th anniversary celebrations" for DOCTOR WHO to appear on the cover of the *Radio Times* with a claim that the Doctor was back, when we all knew he wasn't, the BBC plumped wholeheartedly for option three. For any organisation such deception would be sharp practice; for the BBC, who had the original pure genius to hatch the programme, the occasion was not just one of the Emperor being caught naked, but in a full-frontal pose as well.

The premature death of DOCTOR WHO is a metaphor for our time. This is not just a scrap between a broadcasting company and some unusually ardent fans over the fate of a television programme. DOCTOR WHO's disappearance has a far greater significance. It's the signal of a society that has lost the confidence to portray genuine heroes. This issue is about such heroes, freshness, confidence and colour — and whether Britain as a nation is still capable of the courage and spontaneity that makes drama — written, on stage, or on film or television — of the quality that DOCTOR WHO at its peak consistently displayed.

This was a gothic birthday celebration that must have made even Phillip Hinchcliffe's hair stand on end. With licence for totalitarian symbolism, the great hall of the nation was filled with streamers and conscripted revellers. At the very centre was a familiar figure who, depending on your age, was swaddled in frilly shirt and smoking jacket, or long coat and twirly scarf, or even Edwardian frock coat. But whichever version you see, one truth is clear. The figure in the spotlight is dead. As the original Davros once promised the Doctor, we have now learnt "the true meaning of pain".

The birthday was, as every school-age Time Lord now knows, a marketing exercise created mainly to sell video tapes — or more precisely, and abjectly, overpriced tin boxes. Once the *Dark Dimension* project had failed it could be nothing else but a memorial service for a glorious dead hero who had suddenly made a quantum leap into extraordinary secondary sales-based financial significance. He may or may not return to the screen in new stories, and I hope he does, but right now that's not the BBC's chief concern: video sale income, virtually production cost-free, is. It is all rather sad and pathetic, and would be funny if it wasn't actually affecting something we love so much.

The Doctor at his best would never have left the fans feeling so cheated. He certainly never treated them with such cynicism. But that's all a long, long way from the wretched anniversary tin boxes. My copy of *The Daleks* had on its base a promising picture of the original (Michael Wisher) Davros and Nyder. Unfortunately, they weren't in either *The Chase* nor *Remembrance of the Daleks*, which lay within. And the unsuspecting consumer who picked up the box and took it home to watch the Daleks on Westminster Bridge also discovered he'd been sold a pup. The other box I received carried a picture of Tom Baker, along with 3 tapes of *The Trial of a Time Lord* (Colin Baker yes, Tom Baker no). In the case of this second tin, on the outside genuinely a rather exquisite Police Box, some fans should be forgiven for feeling this TARDIS was bigger on the outside than the inside.

It wasn't always so. Readers of DWB won't need to be told at length why the Doctor was such a great hero. Suffice it to say that DOCTOR WHO was one of the shining lights of post war Britain — for millions upon millions of us, some would argue, part of the very soul of the pre-Thatcher period, as comforting and British as the Tower of London or red telephone boxes. It supplied great drama — and didn't duck great issues. And at the centre, the man himself — surely in some of the earlier incarnations one of the purest forces for good in television history. Around him was an immediate "family" of companions, assistants, gadgetry and allies that formed a comfort zone, a constellation of familiarity for all the fans who watched every Saturday. This was an entire micro universe that amplified the reassurance that was the genius behind the show. Patrick Troughton had his recorder (*not*, as whoever scripted the CHILDREN IN NEED Special imagined, a flute), Pertwee the yellow roadster Bessie and the Whomobile. Tom Baker had his scarf and robot dog and so on. Without these accoutrements, the universe would have seemed a sparser, more soulless place.

At a deeper, social level, it embodied the post war political settlement of Britain - the Empire had been exchanged for a welfare state that at least in its rhetoric aimed to look after everyone, and there was something for everyone, however different, within this universal and comforting certainty. This morality was faithfully mirrored in the show: evil and often superior force countered by courage, ingenuity and a belief in fair shares and justice. The programme exuded a sense that nothing would change that, and that there would always be room for ideals, and less room for the bad guys, while the Doctor was around.

This man was our monarch. And every time the Daleks, Cybermen, Krynoids, giant maggots or whatever were defeated, we slept easier in our beds. It, was quite simply, a beautiful programme which in time became part of our lives. Nor could its progenitor, the BBC, have any complaints — DOCTOR WHO required only medium to low budgets, and at its peak delivered top ten ratings. In 1975 and 1976 everyone was happy, and the Doctor would go on forever.

Of course it couldn't last. In the outside world the IMF arrived at Britain's exchequer and the post-war dream of prosperity for all was over. The landscape had changed — less money, hope, and above all less trust in the power of good faith and kindness to see us through. The Tom Baker era carried on for a few years, in ever lighter vein, almost blatantly ignoring the much rougher street culture that lay outside the BBC's White City fiefdom. But worse, much worse, was to come.

In the 1980s trust in British institutions collapsed. They had been found, in the manner of the Time Lords in the otherwise dull *Trial of a Time Lord*, first corrupt, then incompetent, then impotent. At first the BBC, like the Tom Baker Doctor, tried to buck the trend (one Director General, Alasdair Milne, tried to stand up to Mrs Thatcher and found himself fired for his pains) — and then capitulated, becoming the nervy and impoverished organisation it is today. Much of the fun disappeared from working for the Beeb. I remember one man describing to me how in 1975, creativity took place in a cocoon of career

certainty and frequent trolleys of champagne. The latter was of course a recipe for some for sloth and a dead liver, but for others for a brilliantly creative atmosphere that spawned MONTY PYTHON, REGINALD PERRIN, FAWLTY TOWERS, I CLAUDIUS and so on — all now supreme earners of video income. The same man now tells me how every three months a staff circular arrives offering anyone on a staff contract large bribes to leave. He would love to oblige — he has no joy in a continued existence at what he sees as a BBC of cut-throat casualised contracts and an eastern-European type culture of passivity and fear — and is simply waiting for his pension terms to reach an acceptable level.

The champagne trolleys have long-since trundled off to the management and accountants' bunker. At the same time, the BBC has grown excruciatingly timid — and is petrified of risk, or worse, of appearing to set out its own views rather than follow what it feels audiences want. Thus the BBC turned to making mass television by numbers, of which ELDORADO had to be the supreme example. For the Doctor these developments had a more frightening relevance than any on-screen threat from the Emperor Dalek, CyberController or the Master ever held.

Whom the Gods would destroy, they would first embellish in carnival colours and question-marks. As a wise man once said, it is one of the easiest things to be silly, but one of the most difficult to be funny. In the face of perceived competition from first the *Star Wars* and then the *Star Trek* films, it appears with hindsight that the programme simply lost its nerve. The deeply distinctive title music was changed. The opening sequence was adjusted to bring it into line with other higher-budget equivalents. Finally, it failed to resist effectively when removed from its Saturday afternoon home.

As a famous dictator might have said, to destroy a television institution, first destabilise its most defining characteristics. But the Doctor's enemies never had to raise their claws. It was all done from within. In the 80s the show wasn't always bad, far from it. But the sense of reliability had gone — and with it, trust. It wandered around weekday evenings like an old friend fallen on sad, bad and hard times, occasionally shining bright like the hero it had once been, but never able to guarantee its appeal.

There was no lack of effort. Certainly on occasion, say in *Trial of a Time Lord*, or *Remembrance of the Daleks*, the will to survive was there in force. *Trial*, if counted as one story rather than four, was the longest and in some senses the most ambitious DOCTOR WHO outing of all time. *Remembrance*, as the anniversary Daleks history relates, "used more Daleks than any other TV serial" and in the extremity of parts of its plot (rival Dalek factions, duped human stooges, the demolition of Skaro and the isolation of the final Dalek), exhibited a verve and purpose of which any DOCTOR WHO story should be proud.

Only... only... the show had lost its moral purity, and with it, its central guiding force. Any casual viewer catching less than all 14 episodes of *Trial* could not be blamed for feeling revulsion at the Doctor's loss of moral authority. Worse, the final episode was too obscure and did little to repair this loss of faith in the Doctor's motives — and eroded his appeal as a popular hero. It was bad enough that the Time Lords should be revealed as corrupt and incompetent, but that the Doctor could no longer be fully trusted was a deathblow to the show. *Remembrance* portrayed a Doctor who was clearly on the right side, but who revealed few of his thoughts and plans and was capable of great destructive acts. This was a far cry from "the ends never justifying the means" moral lexicon so frequently employed in DOCTOR WHO first 20 years. The show had lost its unique appeal. The Doctor was no longer there when we needed him, and he was capable of crimes little different from those of his enemies.

The show had little left to offer. The "graveyard scheduling" against CORONATION STREET had a predictable impact on what audience remained. On December 6th 1989, the last DOCTOR WHO episode was transmitted. So obscure had the show become that most viewers who had known him over the years took years to realise he was gone.

Now we receive signals that the BBC really is considering reviving the show. A possible link with Spielberg would be regeneration indeed, but we may seriously hate the consequences. A much better solution would be to restore the show to its old 25 minute form, perhaps in its familiar Saturday home, maybe at first in a more protected BBC2 evening slot. With minor tweaking for 90s audience, Bruce Forsyth and Cilla Black have both been examples of other regulars of BBC1's 60s/70s Saturday all-star line-up able confidently to regain their share of prime time turf.

The Doctor was always far more special than either of these. But if the show is to make the triumphant return it deserves, it must be recognised as the valuable piece of national property that it is, reflecting all sort of ideals, tastes and fashions. That diversity which caused such sharp (and exceptionally keenly and impressively argued in these pages and others) debates also provided the wealth of talent and impetus of opinion that made the programme great. The problem of the 80s was that the show retreated into a dead-end of introspection and continuity references, while at the same time sacrificing its dignity while chasing audiences.

To return it must emphatically set its own agenda. It must be cool, streetwise, relevant and heroic. The need for a hero is stronger now in an age of disillusion than it ever was 20-30 years ago. As for issues, take your pick of the headlines: drug dealing, ethnic cleansing, genocide, industrial poisoning, political corruption, racial slavery, mass prostitution, forced labour, state-of-the-art propaganda and thought control to name but a few.

The Doctor should be the hero who takes it all on, crisply, bravely, decisively. His greatest battles are still ahead of him. The times are bleaker and more cynical, but that's the beautiful opportunity of the situation. You can't trust the government, but you could trust a new Doctor, bringing you a new promise that at least somebody was there to keep the lights burning.

A useful forerunner was the last Bond film in 1989. In *Licence to Kill* 007 resigns from Her Majesty's Government to combat a Colombian drugs baron. On the run from both his enemies and his former employers he engages in a raw series of encounters with opponents far nastier than his earlier foes. This was the right Bond film for its time, hard, brutish, active, and with little to do with the tired 60s formula that predated it. It worked because the threats were current, relevant and totally deadly. It also worked because the main character played his moral cards straight down the line.

The Doctor could do this. Active, sophisticated, redoubtable and morally pure, he could fill the gap that millions now perceive — the failure of authority to take a stand and provide a refuge. He could be the nightwatchman of last resort. He could even be Batman, Sherlock Holmes, Einstein ... and Winston Churchill all in one. In short, the guy has the quality to reach the stratospheric top of the all-time heroes' league.

This is a long way from the rather dubious efforts of BBC Enterprises to sell more tin boxes through birthday celebrations for a hero who no longer exists. Much will depend on the BBC. It does not have the supreme confidence it once had, nor has it the call on the ocean of goodwill it once enjoyed. But it still has talent and resources unequalled among almost all global television companies. It could all yet be done.

The demand for a bold, scintillating return by the Doctor is still there. I can see it now, restored, calmly and assuredly reoccupying the space it always held. The decision could still be made, so easily, so painlessly. All it takes is the flick of a mogul's pen, in between the power-breakfast meeting and the first morning conference call.

Maybe the BBC can't bear to do it because it might put the sales of old material on video at risk... maybe it simply can't bring itself to believe that anything as good as DOCTOR WHO at its best could be made now. Maybe, with its Charter renewal on the way, and the prospect of a serious cut in income, or worse, actual dismemberment, facing it, the BBC is simply too petrified to opt for anything except the status quo.

It musn't be. There's no need. It's their choice. And in microcosm it's their future, apart from a vain hope that one morning soon they'll wake up and discover that the government has no plans to reduce the licence fee, to reduce the BBC's airtime, nor to open television markets yet further. Not just politics but technology, is against them; who'll need the BBC, when there are 400 channels on your television, one day soon?

They could save themselves. By making programmes that they can sell all over the world, on every network, in every language. Remember, it's been done before (how else did we ever see *Tomb of the Cybermen* again?). The BBC itself has a fine brand image (ask any of the people east of Berlin who swore by it for decades in the bad old days), and in DOCTOR WHO they have a very special brand image indeed, equal to the task of sustaining them all over the world through the hard years that lie ahead. But the years themselves are fast running out. Maybe, just maybe, when they are truly on the edge of the precipice, they'll come to their senses and at last send for the Doctor, to get them out of the mess.

George Lucas

Classifieds

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THE PERFECT CUBE

A QUESTION. Which season will be the last to have one of its stories released on video?

Well, season four of course. That's inevitable. But forget about that. Which season from which stories survive...

That's right. Season sixteen - The Key to Time. They've released something from every other season, even quality-challenged zones like season twenty four. But they don't even seem to have looked at the story with the magic words 'Douglas Adams' on its credits, or at the one which is now the only unreleased/repeated/scheduled story in the top fifty of the DWB chart. Up till now there'd always been a chance that BBC Video were holding the whole lot back for release as a Key to Time boxed set, just in time for Christmas '94. But there's no sign of it (maybe they couldn't find any way to make a Crystal Cube tin?). Even addicts of the Williams era tend to overlook it, too eager to slobber over Lalla and rehabilitate *The Creature from the Pit* to notice it. (Now *that's* what I call a neglected gem!).

We start as the TARDIS is struck open by some immense force, effectively suggested by a blazing light and an organ chord. Remember now that the TARDIS was still inviolable then, not prone to collision with time fields and warp ellipses — the Doctor's stumbling delivery of the question "Who are you?" ("Do you really need to ask, Doctor?") is all we need to confirm that this is something out of the ordinary. The Guardian's dismissive, unconcerned manner, culminating in his off-hand threat ("Nothing will happen to you Doctor - ever.") confirms this feeling, establishing the basis for the season perfectly. Ian Marter's novelisation is superb, but it's too dark, missing the understated effectiveness of the transmitted scenes. Add to that the continuity-laden introduction of Mary Tamm's Romana ("I should've thrown the President [Borusa] to the Sontarans while I had the chance.") and we're off to a flying start.

Romana is another of the season's great delights. I know I'm in a minority here, but I prefer my Romana tall, dark and icy. The barbed dialogue between the two Time Lords is always entertaining, and is never undermined by the cosiness of that developed during Lalla's time as Romana, even if it does wane towards the season's end, as they start to work as a team. K9 also works well in this environment, his unimaginative experience of the universe at large providing the perfect bridge between the irrational Doctor and the knowledgeable but inexperienced Romana.

Things get going with Robert Holmes' most intimate and touching piece, *The Ribos Operation*. A great example of how atmospheric studio drama can be, it's lifted by a typically appealing performance from Iain Cuthbertson as the galactic conman Garron (though the Fagin-Jewishness does grate somewhat), and one of Dudley Simpson's most effective scores. Forget *City of Death*: the melancholic theme pervading the Riban scenes leaves one torn with sorrow at the thought of this culture, oppressed under the dead hand of tradition and absolute belief, but able to understand its appeal, even ffter Binro's sufferings become clear — and the accuracy of the Seeker's prophecies leave one unsure whether there might not be some foundation for those beliefs. This is DOCTOR WHO's Prime Directive story, but it takes no sides, instead presenting a society which, left to its own non-technological devices, is collapsing into slow decline (*Creature from the Pit* makes this a central plot point, but *Ribos* treats it with greater subtlety), but is visited by perfect examples of the sort of outsiders who can only make things worse. It's a very sad piece, filled with characters whose triumphs are behind them — from Garron and Unstoffe, through Binro to the Graf Vynda K and Sholakh. The latter pair are particularly pathetic, with Paul Seed (nowadays the director of HOUSE OF CARDS and TO PLAY THE KING) portraying this fragile Caligula in a style which stands comparison to John Hurt's bravura performance in I CLAUDIUS. It's a little over-played towards the end, but otherwise it's let down only by the unnecessary but obligatory monster.

In *The Pirate Planet* we have a perfect example of DOCTOR WHO standing exactly where it should — balancing on the edge of credibility without ever quite tipping over... The Captain is a blustering buffoon, but this is pointed out and explained just as it starts to get in the way of the story, and given another meaning. "He's just a terrible old bully. All that by the evil nose of the sky demon nonsense, it's just bluster." "The Captain is a very clever and a very dangerous man. He's just playing with us, wants to know why we've come here." We're used to the Doctor playing the fool to lull his enemies into a false sense of security — it's different to have the enemies do so... And just as Tom Baker's Doctor starts to become a clown, he turns and *screams* in outrage at the camera, his voice hoarse with an outrage almost unprecedented in the series — because the Captain has dared to suggest that he might *appreciate* his atrocities simply because of their *cleverness*. It takes all the clichés of DOCTOR WHO and makes them fresh and effective (and disturbing, as the Doctor mutters "I'd give it up if I were you", in pained distress as the Guards escorting him are shot down) by sending them up and turning them upside down. Episodes one and two end with the Doctor threatened by the 'monsters' — who turn out to be the goodies! "My bio-rhythms must be at an all time low" comments the Doctor as the Captain pulls a million-to-one-against rabbit from his hat. "Bandraginus V, by every last bone in my body you shall be avenged", vows the clean-cut hero — and then the Captain is brought down by last of his planetary victims itself! It's only weaknesses arise when it presents the WHO clichés straight, as if ideas that stupid are so funny by themselves that they don't need to be sent up. But if that was a crime then half the Radio Four LE department would be behind bars (check out THE HARPOON some time for an example of this.)

The Stones of Blood is the story which does get recognition — or at least, enough to put it in the top fifty! A traditional WHO in many ways, slagging off religion while giving the Doctor the chance to bamboozle some pedantic bureaucrats, it still rings the changes through its casting. It's a pity that one of the most attractive and engaging female characters since Liz Shaw (Vyvian Fay bears a certain resemblance to a middle-aged Lynda Day at times) proves to have been the villainous head of a 'man hating' sisterhood through the ages, but then she's balanced by the marvellous Amelia Rumford, the best companion we never had. Otherwise, straight down the line, but highly enjoyable, even if the Ogri are a bit silly (one running thread through this season is the disappointing monsters. But who really cares about that?).

The Androids of Tara almost epitomises the concept of a neglected gem. It commits the crime of containing no monsters (sorry, there's a token monster which is disposed of instantly and looks absolutely appalling), no silky voiced megalomaniacs plotting universal domination, and no continuity links. It's utterly unmemorable, because it contains nothing worthy of memory — except a good script and decent acting. It's a perfectly-paced romantic swashbuckler, which is able to ring the changes simply because so little is at stake. The Doctor could afford to walk away from this one, provided he can get Romana and the segment off Grendel, so there's an extra edge to their conversation in the Lodge.

Count Grendel is one of the series' great villains, irredeemable without actually being evil, and played by Peter Jeffrey with a charming perfidy reminiscent of the Master at his very best. A megalomaniac perhaps, but an entirely credible one — he's the sort of man who kept England fighting for a couple of generations during the Wars of the Roses, a parallel emphasised when Grendel offers the Doctor the role of Kingmaker. His downfall is due entirely to unforeseeable circumstances (ie: The Doctor) — whereas the reach of most WHO villains is greater than their grasp, Grendel at no point puts his place in Taran society at risk (with no proof of his wrong-doings, Reynart couldn't have given him more than a token slap on the wrist without appearing a tyrant, and inviting the fate of King John) — until the Doctor takes the battle to him, and drives him from his power-base. His only mistake is his failure to appreciate that the Doctor and Romana aren't playing by Taran rules — a failure symbolised by his dismissal of the fourth segment, a source of power literally beyond his wildest dreams — that, and the fact that he lets himself become angry, and vengeful, after Lamia's death. But even with his judgement clouded he gets away, and it's difficult to believe he'll be in the wilderness for long...we just have to hope that his second confrontation with Reynart doesn't result in the Mutually Assured Destruction described in *the Prisoner of Zenda*'s sequel, *Rupert of Hentzau*...

Then comes *The Power of Kroll*. It's drab and uninspiring, and tries to pass off men in green make-up as amphibious aliens. It's also decently written, competently acted, passably produced and above all *watchable*. Even Kroll is a decent attempt at an utterly impractical monster, let down only by an obvious CSO line (now how many Pertwee stories do we mockingly forgive that, I wonder?). Worst story of the season? If only it was the worst of all time. That'd be something to crow about!

And so to the conclusion, and *The Armageddon Factor*. Once again, the acting carries any flaws elsewhere. John Woodvine's Marshal is another of this season's gallery of disturbingly down-to-earth non-villains — someone you might see on the TV news, and who might just take you in long enough for you to vote for him. The opening sequence plays a marvellous, pre-post-modernist joke on the viewer, complete with awful CSO, and then there's the planet hopping plot structure, and that chilling end to episode four, as the Doctor walks into the Shadow's trap and the camera pans down to show his loyal companion — K9. William Squire, one of the better Hunters from CALLAN and almost the only good thing about the BLAKE'S 7 episode *Horizon*, is highly effective, seemingly one step ahead all the way, and just as the previous season ended with the Sontarans' unexpected appearance, the Black Guardian finally turns up just as the Shadow fails, to reveal that the entire season's been running to his plan right all along, up to and including this moment, and that he's ready to make his move. The pawns have been sacrificed, in a real cosmic chess game, but one which is all the more interesting because the villain's the one who started by rigging the board.

Which leads on to the end of the Quest. An anti-climax, everyone says. It didn't seem like that to me at the time. So, the Doctor doesn't hand the key over to The Guardian. We don't see spectacular scenes of the entire universe stopping, of things being put right all over the cosmos. Under Cartmel, we probably would have done. But here we've got the real Doctor, the one who improvises, and surprises, and turns situations upside down when we least expect it. So he leads the (Black) Guardian on and gives us a nice lesson about Absolute Power, and Absolute Corruption, and muddling on through an imperfect world rather than accepting the balance of some supposedly omni-scient being, who shows little sign that his concerns include us. It's all a lot more useful and satisfying than any amount of cosmic-Terminatoring. It's what DOCTOR WHO ought to be about. As is the whole season.

Anthony Brown

STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION

12|**The Pegasus** 15th January 1994

WRITTEN BY RONALD D. MOORE; DIRECTOR LEVAR BURTON; MUSIC JOHN DEBNEY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR DAVID STIPES

An excursion into Riker's past explains a mystery that has puzzled fans for years.

Captain Picard is none too happy to find himself serving as a 'role model' for school children at the annual Captain Picard Day festivities, and is relieved to be interrupted by an unexpected message. They are ordered to rendezvous with the Crazy Horse to pick up someone from Starfleet Intelligence who will have further orders...and they are authorized to exceed the new warp 5 speed limits for the duration of the mission.

Their guest proves to be Admiral Pressman, who was Riker's first Captain while aboard the U.S.S. Pegasus. Riker seems almost stricken to see Pressman, who tells him that their old ship is about to be found by the Romulans. The Pegasus was lost to a core breach some 12 years ago, with only the Captain, Helmsman Riker and seven others escaping before they saw what appeared to be a matter/anti-matter explosion in space. As far as they knew, the ship and all hands were lost. However, Pressman reveals that Starfleet has an agent planted in the Romulan High Command and that three days ago this source reported that a Warbird has found a piece of debris from The Pegasus in the Devalan system. The Romulans are now searching for the rest of the ship.

Pressman explains that the Pegasus was the prototype for many of the Galaxy class systems and that there is much aboard her that the Romulans would value. They must recover or destroy the remains of the Pegasus first.

Reaching the Devalan system, the Enterprise is confronted by a Warbird commanded by the sardonic Sirol. He and Picard both claim to be engaged in scientific research, and begin separate searches under each other's gaze...

Over a drink Pressman tries to discover whether Riker is still the same man he knew 12 years ago. Riker tells Pressman that he thinks a lot about those days and wonders if they did the right thing. The Admiral not only assures him that they acted for the good of the Federation, he is ready to try again and claims to have the personal support of the head of Starfleet Intelligence. He gives Riker secret orders to reveal nothing to anyone, including Picard.

Pressman also visits Picard to discuss Riker. Pressman is shocked to learn that Picard had never met the man before selecting him to be his First Officer, and the difference in philosophy between the two men becomes quite clear when Picard explains that he chose Riker because he had refused to let the Hood's Captain to beam down during a crisis situation, thereby risking a Court Martial for disobeying a direct order. Pressman sees no value in such behaviour, while Picard sees someone more concerned with his ship than his record. Pressman refuses to reveal more about their mission, saying only that in a crisis he needs officers willing to obey without question — such as Riker.

Data and Geordi detect energy readings which indicate that the warp core section of the Pegasus has somehow found its way inside an asteroid marked by deep crevices. Pressman is angry when Riker suggests that their only real option is to destroy the asteroid and deny the Romulans any prize. Instead, they move off so as to mislead the Romulans while they consider.

As Pressman berates Riker for his 'disloyal' behaviour, Picard summons him to explain his unease about the whole mission, and that he has called in a lot of favours and obtained the classified report of the Pegasus inquiry. There was a mutiny on board, and the Captain fled with a small band of loyal officers.

Riker admits that they had been involved in an experiment which had caused an explosion in engineering. At that moment the First Officer, Chief Engineer and most of the bridge crew had mutinied against Pressman. Acting on instinct and Academy ideals, Riker grabbed a phaser and went to the aid of his Captain. They engaged in a running fire fight to the escape pod and almost immediately afterwards there was a huge explosion. But Picard notes that the JAG report suggests that the surviving officers appeared to be hiding information and wants to know what and why. He explodes in anger when Riker says he cannot tell him because he is under direct orders from Admiral Pressman.

Picard's request that Starfleet Command to delay the mission is denied and Blackwell warns him that the head of Starfleet Intelligence is taking a great interest in their progress. Pressman decides that the only way to find what they are looking for is to fly the Enterprise itself into a deep crevice in the asteroid, and that if Picard objects he will be relieved...

Terry O'Quinn, an actor who works both with and without the aid of hairpieces, plays Pressman au natural and thus looks more than a bit like a younger Picard. Michael Mack is one of the better Romulans we have seen as Sirol.

This is a continuity festival, stringing together a legacy from the original series as well as references to Picard and Riker's first meeting, the Treaty of Algeron first alluded to in *The Defector*, and even the warp 5 speed limit imposed in *Force of Nature*. It also ends up providing a much better explanation for why Riker does not get his own command - after this his record is no longer spotless.

It is also pretty clear that this is another step away from the Roddenberry STAR TREK universe in so far as Roddenberry insisted upon seeing Starfleet as the "best of the best". The first season episode *Conspiracy* was originally conceived as a plot hatched by disillusioned Starfleet officers who wanted to adopt a more militant stance against the Federation's adversaries and were willing to seize control of the organization and weaponry to do it. Roddenberry vetoed the idea as unworthy of the ideals of Starfleet. Those ideals have been eroding as it has been sometime since anyone could say as confidently as Wesley Crusher did in that first season, "I'm with Starfleet, we don't lie." Most of the senior officers we have seen for the past few years have had their own agendas and guilty secrets, and appear indifferent to what it costs other people. Maybe the universe has gotten nastier or confidence less justified, but it is hard to imagine that the current Star Trek mentality will produce another Captain Picard, whose eloquent defences of morality seem more and more like a quaint liability rather than a strength, when casting STAR TREK - VOYAGER. Certainly, DS9 has no comparable figure. *Star Trek VI* also took off in this direction with a bit of retro-disillusionment.

Ironically, this turn to what is styled as grittier, more realistic, conflict-driven drama echoes the claims of the new crop of competing sci-fi shows as they have taken their shots at the big kid on the block as though Roddenberry's vision of a nobler future arising from our self-inflicted ashes was still in charge.(8)

13|**Homeward** 22nd January 1994

TELEPLAY BY NAREN SHANKAR; TELEVISION STORY BY SPIKE STEINGASSER; DIRECTOR ALEXANDER SINGER; MUSIC DENNIS MCCARTHY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR RON MOORE

Remember waaaay back in *Heart of Glory* when Worf mentioned he had a foster brother? Unfortunately, Spike did. And so begins the worst Prime Directive script ever.

The Enterprise responds to a distress call from Boral 2. Worf is especially concerned because the message came from his foster brother, Nikolai Rozhenko, who has been stationed on the planet for some time as a cultural observer. The inhabitants of Boral 2 are not technologically advanced and have no notion of space-faring civilizations. It is the observer's task to study them while remaining undetected in a shielded outpost.

Boral 2 proves to be undergoing rapid atmospheric dissipation, and will inevitably become uninhabitable within 38 hours. Intense plasmodic reactions are even affecting the Enterprise power systems with intermittent system failures and surges. They are unable to raise any response from the observation post but find faint power emissions from nearby caverns. Worf is surgically altered to appear Borallan and sent after his brother, with whom he has had many disagreements in the past. They had both gone to Starfleet Academy, but Nikolai soon left as he found the rules unacceptable, despite being a brilliant and a natural leader.

Worf is shocked to find that his brother has used a shield generator to preserve a breathable atmosphere in the caverns and has led the inhabitants of a nearby village there while disguised as a Borallan. He now tells them that Worf is his brother who has come to help them. Worf reminds Nikolai that he is breaking his orders by making contact with the villagers, but his brother refuses to sit and watch these people die. Worf says there is nothing they can do for them, but Nikolai insists on speaking to Picard himself. Picard tells an unimpressed Rozhenko he has violated the Prime Directive. Rozhenko insists that they have the possibility of preserving one village from a rich and beautiful culture which deserves a chance to survive and grow.

Picard refuses to let Rozhenko return to the surface to retrieve his computer logs and notes, so he is given permission to use the ship's computer to establish a link and upload his data. He barely finishes his task as the last of the atmosphere disappears from Boral 2 and Picard solemnly observes "We must face the ramifications of the Prime Directive and honour those lives we cannot save". But an unexplained power drain from Holodeck 5 shows that Rozhenko has transported the villagers to a holodeck replica of the caverns while they slept. He believes they can fool them into believing they are still on Boral 2 while they are in fact taken to another planet and beamed back down. Worf informs him that he has disgraced both of them.

The Captain has few options except to try to make Rozhenko's plan work. As the planet will not look exactly like Boral 2, Nikolai is determined to prepare them by returning to the holodeck and pretending to take them on a long trek away from the caverns to a distant land which will be unfamiliar. Picard orders Worf to keep an eye on his brother during the 'journey'. But faults in the Enterprise energy grid cause the underlying walls of the holodeck to appear in pool. Later, the village chronicler, Voren, searching for a lost scroll, goes to look for it in a passageway and stumbles through the holodeck door. He runs into Ten Forward, almost speechless with shock and panic at what he has seen...

Nikolai Rozhenko (whose forename, as might be expected, proves not to be that established in Pocket's *Starfleet Academy* books) is played by Paul Sorvino, veteran of many television dramas and films such as *Goodfellas*. He seems not to partake of his parents' Russian accent but then, they have never mentioned him either when they have visited Worf. That is the least of the perplexities that his character faces. Worf discovers that one of the village women is bearing Nikolai's child (thus proving he made "contact" before the crisis struck). It could be born with alien features and physiology. And how long will Doctor Crusher's Borallan makeovers last? A lifetime, or could his Borallan nose job revert?

Aside from such problems with the practicality of the story's plot, this episode makes it very clear that no one knows how to think coherently about the Prime Directive. In the beginning, it seemed to be a rule that forbade members of the Federation from meddling in the development of worlds that do not as yet have the scientific capability to venture into space. And the rule was as much to prevent more advanced civilizations, or individuals from them, from exploiting the fear and worship their power could evoke. In the original series primitive worlds fell prey to power struggles between the Federation and the Klingons, or an historian created a new Nazi regime by using a model from Earth's past.

In THE NEXT GENERATION, the Prime Directive has been defended more generally as a broad principle of not intervening in a culture's autonomous development and self-determination. This has been applied to both pre-and post-spaceflight civilizations (*Symbiosis*). This has never been consistently adhered to (i.e: *Penpals*, *Justice*), but Picard has generally talked eloquently, if not always convincingly, on the subject. Here he talks nonsense. The principle seemed to be that 'we' could not know how a civilisation might develop, and therefore had no right to 'direct' that development. But here, that development is inevitably at an end. What principle is honoured in allowing a civilization to perish from a natural disaster? This is Galactic Darwinism. The Enterprise has responded to many cases of natural disaster before without pausing to consider if they are obligated to do nothing. The more relevant issue here would be to consider if it is fair or just to save but a few lives when only that few can be saved, and if you are really doing them a kindness. Nikolai's fervour is tainted by his personal involvement, but even without that, he could be accused of manipulating the Borellans as though they were to be prize exhibits in an anthropological zoo rather than dealing with them honestly. Whether such a small population — there never seems to be more then about 15 villagers — could be genetically viable is a separate question.(5)

STAR TREK DEEP SPACE NINE

11|**Rivals** 8th January 1994

TELEPLAY BY JOE MENOSKY; STORY BY JIM TROMBETTA AND MICHAEL PILLER; DIRECTOR DAVID LIVINGSTON; MUSIC JAY CHATTAWAY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR GARY HUTZEL

Quark finds out what it is like to have some competition on the space station and O'Brien finds something new to dislike about Bashir.

Odo finds himself keeping an eye on a handsome new arrival to whom a prosperous widow, Roana, is confiding quite a bit — describing an asteroid mining concession she plans to invest in. Martis finds her musings fascinating and offers to help her shoulder the burden of managing her funds — just as Odo arrests him to face the charges brought by an elderly couple he 'helped' with their money... Martis is a refugee from the Elorian system, listeners in whom people like to confide. Martis protests that it is all a misunderstanding and that the couple had refused to press charges before.

Chief O'Brien is dismayed to find that the person who annoys him most — Julian Bashir — is warming up on the racketball court he has constructed in the hope of stimulating interest in his favourite sport. Bashir is attired in an immaculate exercise suit and mentions that he captained his medical school team to triumph in the sector championships. O'Brien is irritated to the point where he insists on playing a game against Bashir.

Martis finds his cell already occupied by a spectacularly ugly alien who is snoring loudly. He wakes the man, who apologises and tells him he once had everything — youth, vigour, fame, wealth beyond measure — but lost it all through a multicoloured globe he holds in his hand. Martis recognises it as some sort of game, although he has never seen its like before. The alien plays and loses again. Martis tells him it all sounds like rotten luck. The alien says that "in the end it all comes down to luck." He plays one more time, wins and dies. Martis takes the game and soon discovers that he wins every time he plays.

O'Brien leaves the racketball court in an exhausted rage, while Bashir tells Dax how terrified he was that O'Brien would have a heart attack in front of him. The chief insisted upon continuing to play even when he broke his

racket. Bashir arranged a fake call from sick-bay while O'Brien was busy replicating a replacement so as not to humiliate the Chief. But O'Brien insists on playing again, and becomes even more upset when Bashir plays badly — too badly. He quickly calls a halt and says he does not need charity.

Odo reluctantly releases Martis when the elderly couple drop the charges. Martis is broke but realises the globe has value when Quark offers to buy it. He goes into business with a widow who runs a shop opposite Quark's, allowing gambling on replicated copies of the game. Not only do Quark's customers abandon him, his own brother leaves him for a better split of the profits with Martis. Quark demands Sisko enforce his "exclusive" contract to control gambling on the space station, but the Commander points out that his arrangement was with the Cardassians...

Chris Sarandan is Martis, who has an unusually large role for a guest star. Although Odo calls him a "listener", there does not appear to be any attempt to suggest that he is of Guinan's race. K Callan, who plays Ma Kent on LOIS AND CLARK, is Roana. Albert Henderson is the dying alien and Barbara Bosson, the pitiable Faye Furillo of HILL STREET BLUES, is the shopkeeper who becomes partners with Martis.

Despite the fact that Siddig El Fadil has emerged as the official male sex symbol of DS9, it is Colm Meaney who appears shirtless twice in this episode. It is not an enthralling sight. 'Sid' fans must be content with his spiffy racketball outfit.(6)

12)**The Alternate** 15th January 1994

TELEPLAY BY BILL DIAL; STORY BY JIM TROMBETTA AND BILL DIAL; DIRECTOR DAVID CARSON; MUSIC DENNIS MCCARTHY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR GLENN NEUFELD

It's turning into an Odo kind of season with another major exploration of the shapeshifter's past and his desire to find others like himself.

Quark is engaging in the Ferengi death ritual — selling pieces of a famous dead Ferengi. But Odo has checked and knows the man in question is still very much alive. Quark seems genuinely shaken to learn that anyone could have taken him in by faking the official Ferengi Seal of Dismemberment, and left him with 5,000 pieces of somebody. Odo's enjoyment is interrupted when Dr. Mora Pol enters and immediately comments on Odo's ears. Mora is the Bajoran scientist who was assigned to Odo after he was found and sent to a laboratory, and on whom Odo models his 'humanoid' appearance. Odo grumbles that Dr. Mora did not warn him that he was coming to the space station, but Quark happily insists that Odo's Dad is always welcome.

Mora observes Odo's hostility towards Quark and says he can see Odo is still having trouble with social integration. He asks him to tell him about 'this police thing' he has gotten involved in, as he cannot believe Odo does not miss their work in the lab. Odo will only admit to missing the exploration for others like himself.

But Mora has come to DS9 hoping Odo can help him follow up the reports of a Bajoran science probe in the Gamma Quadrant which has found DNA traces similar to Odo's on a planet six light years from the wormhole.

En route Mora describes to Dax how at first Odo was just an organic broth. They only realised he was sentient when he transformed himself into a replica of the laboratory beaker that had held his liquid form. For Mora it just has not been the same since Odo decided to leave the research institute. Working with him has been the most rewarding part of Mora's career. The trip itself is uneventful but on arrival Dax finds that the planet is subject to frequent seismic activity. They trace the lifesigns to a ruined village, where the silicate-based vegetation displays some shapeshifting qualities. The centre of the village is dominated by an hieroglyphed obelisk which Dax takes back to the ship. As they prepare to leave with a sample of the vegetation, an earthquake splits open the ground and a gas escapes, incapacitating all the members of the team except Odo before they are beamed out.

Back in DS9's sickbay, Bashir is concerned at the Bajorans' condition. Odo is more worried about Dr. Mora's then he wishes to admit, but he brushes away expressions of sympathy, saying "Mora is not my father." The computer is unable to identify the lifeform they brought back, which keeps changing and is multiplying rapidly, but Odo hopes it will provide a key to his past.

In the night however they find the lab damaged and the sample gone, its container savagely destroyed. Could the lifeform have done this itself? Dax comes direct from sickbay but insists she can return to duty. Dr. Mora also regains consciousness as well, but Odo refuses his offer to help with the security scans. O'Brien tracks organic residue into the station's vents and finds there was a temporary temperature increase in the lab when the incident occurred. But O'Brien discovers only a gooey mess which is no longer alive. The crisis appears to be over, but then Bashir, watching his patients in sickbay, is attacked by a large tentacle that grows from an overhead vent...

James Sloyan appears as Dr. Mora, a role that might have been played by Rene Auberjonois himself (à la Brent Spiner and Dr. Soong) but it was decided that the part was too large to make the dual casting feasible. Instead, clever

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makeup creates a notable resemblance between Odo and his first role model. And Sloyan is a very capable actor who will be remembered for his performance as Admiral Jarok in the highly regarded TNG episode, *The Defector*. Mora displays both insensitivity and affection in his relationship with Odo.

Academically inclined viewers were appalled at the roughshod way Dax took the obelisk from the ruins to cart back to DS9 like war booty. The only excuse that could be made was the instability evident in the whole area which might destroy items of archeological interest before they could be studied on site - but the script does not bother with such niceties. The stone artifact is displayed prominently in several scenes on DS9, so perhaps it will be used again in future stories concerning Odo's origins.(7)

Kathleen Toth

Patrick Stewart's *A Christmas Carol.*

"Marley was dead, to begin with."

SO BEGINS both Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and Patrick Stewart's one-man adaptation of his play. After two highly successful Christmas seasons on Broadway, his stage version has finally been brought to London's *Old Vic* for a two week post-Christmas run. Stewart sets out to play all thirty-nine parts, providing each role with its own distinctive voice and characterization, and while on stage he only wears his own suit and no make-up, while the only props that he uses are a plain table, writing desk, chair and stool.

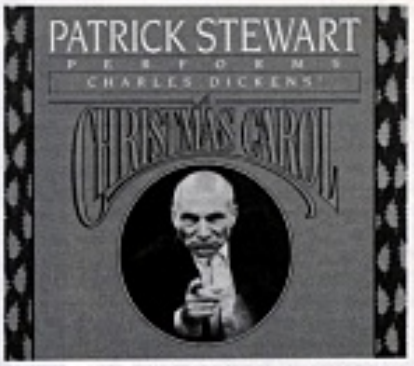
The effective use of lighting is the only effect employed. For example, a pale blue light is used to depict the cold, snowy London streets, and a yellow spotlight highlighting Stewart's face on a darkened stage produces an extremely effective illusion of Scrooge's door-knocker transforming into the face of his former partner, Marley. Stewart's face seems to freeze, with the lighting apparently causing him to sprout a mane of Hartnellian white hair.

This adaptation is a return to Dickens' original story, which shows a much darker side to the one that is usually associated with the telling of this tale. Scenes that are often omitted have been re-instated, such as the moment when The Ghost of Christmas Present opens its cloak to reveal the warped and disfigured forms of a small boy and girl, who represent *Ignorance* and *Want*. The dialogue which accompanies this scene is delivered with such power that this disturbing picture comes across with extreme clarity and detail.

These are the play's strongest elements — Patrick Stewart's performance and delivery of the script. With no sets, no other cast members and no stunning visuals to keep the audience's attention, a lot rests on the actor's ability to take on the solo performance — it needs someone with an immense talent to be able to pull it off. Imagine, for example, William Shatner or Jon Pertwee trying to do it. They are both actors with a certain degree of ability, but they would not be able to give the performance necessary to hold the show together, whereas Patrick Stewart is quite capable of accomplishing it and he does so with consummate ease.

To put Stewart's performance into words is no easy task. He is, simply, unbelievable. The strength of his voice carries through the theatre without the aid of a microphone, even when it is reduced to a quiet whisper as he sings Tiny Tim's song after the Cratchit's Christmas dinner. Each character is brought to life with expertise, his Scrooge given a low grumpy voice, accompanied by a dry, black wit, whilst The Ghost of Christmas Present is played in true Brian Blessed style, full of bombastic might. A full selection of emotions are on display throughout the show, from the childish glee of Christmas time through to Bob Cratchit's sorrow at the death of his youngest son.

Stewart also manages to provide all the sound effects required for the play. These range from the chimes of Scrooge's clock (which almost become a running joke throughout the performance) to his hilarious rendition of London's church bells ringing in Christmas morning. His own sense of humour breaks through on occasions, most notably during Mr Fessiwig's Christmas party, when he portrays all of the partygoers dancing around the room (even planting a surreptitious slap on his own behind!), while 'playing' music on an out of tune violin. As the clock strikes again at the end of this scene, the audience response almost runs out of control, so Stewart pauses for breath and takes a swig from an imaginary drink, allowing them time to calm down! He also comments on Bob Cratchit's remark that the Christmas pudding his wife has given him is "The best thing you have ever done for me!" by raising one sardonic eyebrow at the audience. Unfortu-



nately, such touches cannot be recaptured by the CD and tape version of his performance, which contains a rather more restrained and traditional rendition of the tale.

It has to be pointed out however that anyone who went to this play hoping to see a glimpse of a certain Starfleet Captain would be wasting their time. He never strays from the Dickensian characters that he portrays, not even when narrating the descriptions of some scenes. The vast majority of the humour comes during the visits of the first two ghosts, as with the appearance of The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come the piece descends into a bleak and dark world, where corpses are stripped of their clothing and their possessions sold to pawn brokers on the filth-laden back streets of London. Families grieve the deaths of their children, and all of this is expressed with Dickens' rich detail, making Scrooge's change of heart and joy at being given a second chance even more effective.

At the end of the performance Patrick Stewart received a thoroughly deserved standing ovation from the packed theatre. If he repeats this performance next year, be sure to reserve your tickets, as you're in for an evening that you will never forget.(10)

Mark Eldridge

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21st Century Visions

by Derek Meddings (Paper Tiger, £12.95)

THE NAME of Paper Tiger for me conjures up images of large and beautiful books bursting with colour as exotic album covers, surreal airbrush designs or classic comic work are loving reproduced...with the books usually above my reach on the top shelf and beyond the reach of my bank balance. I was therefore delighted to discover this particular work covering the work of modelmaker supreme Derek Meddings on the many series and films of Gerry and Sylvia Anderson up to and including UFO. Although the cover is awful and a layout artist's nightmare, opening the covers is the equivalent of entering Anderson-heaven.

The book contains well over 300 photographs and designs (many in colour and never seen before) which have been well reproduced to the high standards that one expects of Paper Tiger. For Anderson fans who have grown tired of seeing photographs of how Martin Bower builds his replicas for recent exhibitions and the Fleetway comic, here is a chance to see authentic 1960s shots of Meddings' team at work actually handling the originals! The production sketches and paintings are a delight, reproduced alongside excellent colour sketches of the final vehicles for clear comparison.

Layout (dreadful cover aside) is good, except that many photographs bleed across the pages and I'm not entirely sure how robust the paperback spine on this beautiful volume will prove. Reverential treatment is recommended. Choice items which have been reprinted include various XL5 shots, filming Marineville, making the round house, Thunderbird 2 in *Sun Probe*, Fireflash, Crablogger from *Path of Destruction*, a plethora of Joe 90 landscapes, some nice shots of Gabriel, SHADO Mobiles in *Computer Affair* plus designs for Rescue 3 (Ie Thunderbird 3) and a lot of SHADO hardware.

The book breaks down into seven sections: Visions of the Future (Supercar), Worlds of Illusion (Fireball XL5), Stand by for Action (Stingray), Thunderbirds are GO! and Calling International Rescue (both Thunderbirds), 21st-Century Dreamworlds (Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons/Joe 90/The Secret Service) and Illusions of Reality (UFO). Each is lavishly illustrated with Meddings' memories briefly run alongside the pictures, as transcribed and edited by Sam Mitchell. Some of what Meddings has to say will be familiar to the more experienced Supermarionation devotees out there, but there are still some excellent gems of information and descriptions — although I have to say that the description of how the runway operated in *Trapped in the Sky* is less than clear and could have benefited diagrams.

Another key problem with the text emerges when I compare this book to *The Man Who Drew Tomorrow*. This volume covers the work of Frank Hampson's artists' studio on the Dan Dare strip for *Eagle* in the 1950s. By the end of the book, I felt that I knew not Frank Hampson, but also all those who worked with him: Don Harley, Eric Eden, Greta Tomlinson, etc. That is what this work seems to lack. There are many references to Mike Trim, Ian Scoones, Brian Johnson and co, but I never felt I know them that well, nor for that matter Derek Meddings. This is a minor quibble which is quite a personal view, and indeed though the first couple of chapters are a bit sketchy, once the book reaches Thunderbirds, it becomes a fascinating read.

The other comment I would make is with regards to the photo-captions. I don't know if this is due to lack of time, lack of research or simply to my misunderstanding the format, but episodes titles are very rarely given. This shouldn't have been difficult to achieve, and would have helped the reader to compare the detail to what appears on screen. My memory of Joe 90 is not at all detailed, so I'm assuming that the monorail crash so lovingly described and pictured across pages 108 and 109 comes from the episode *Breakout*. On page 104, a beautiful photograph of a wild west train is said to come from a wild west episode written by Des Saunders and Keith Wilson:...but at no point is it named as *Lone Handed 90*. The fantastic airliner DT19 from the second episode of Captain Scarlet could easily have had the title *Winged Assassin* slipped in there somewhere. For me, this is a very major omission which a little basic research could have rectified. The general public and kids can just gloss over it, but it would be much appreciated by the true enthusiast.

The book stands head and shoulders above the rather lacklustre Titan effort a few years back and is more akin to the fantastic Town Mook Japanese photoguide books of which legends still ring round the echoing halls of comic marts. It is also most pleasing to see this appearing at the same time as David Howe's colourful *Timeframe*, proving that publishers and writers have an eye for the visual aspects as well as the factual ones. All too often, a basic episode guide book with minimal visuals is easy to hack together, but Virgin and — to a greater extent — Paper Tiger, do now seem to be tapping this new source of quality publishing.

Twenty First Century Visions is a must for the dedicated Anderson fan who will, I'm sure, wonder at these fantastic behind the scenes shots. The text is at worst enjoyable, and I'm sure my moans are purely perfectionism rearing its ugly head again. Worth asking for if you want to lose yourself in a world of colour next birthday. (9)

Andrew Pixley

The Pocket In Your Money?

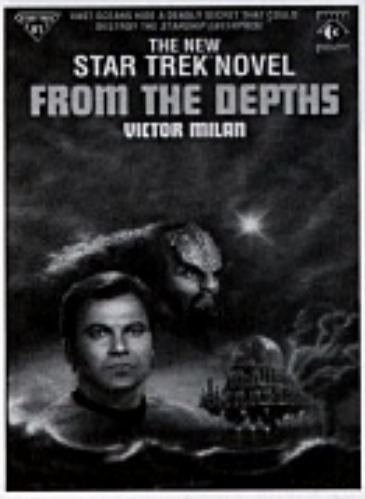
Firestorm is Pocket Books first direct release of Classic Trek in the UK. Pocket Books have (up to now) published UK specific editions of the DS9 and Starfleet Academy books for UK fans. Question: How have Pocket Books tuned Classic Star Trek to the UK market? Answer: Not at all.

Firestorm isn't a UK edition: it's the US edition with an official Pocket Books grubby little adhesive sticker on the back covering the US barcodes and price with their UK equivalents. Internally the book is the US edition with US adverts for forthcoming novels with US release dates) and a US numbered list of past Star Treks, which includes some novels and TV-tie-ins that are not available in the UK.

The Americans have a different numbering of the novels from Titan, and one could argue which is the 'correct' system but that's really irrelevant because Titan's is the established UK system. For the sake of continuity (and a neat collection on the bookshelf — part of the attraction of collections for some) it would have been appropriate for Pocket's editions to match and follow on from Titan. However, Pocket have decided to retain the American presentation and the American numbering system, so although *Firestorm* is the next novel after *The Great Starship Race*, *Firestorm* is #69 and *The Great Starship Race* is #62, which will leave an irritating, unfillable, gap in Star Trek collections. Titan still have the UK reprint rights for the Star Trek novels they've published, and various other houses have the UK rights to the film-books and some of the larger novels. But here we have a 'UK' book that tells us falsely that they're all available from a single publisher. Try ordering a Star Trek by number from *Firestorm*'s list (eg:32, *Chain of Attack*) from your bookstore and you'll get a different book entirely (Titan's 32, *Rules of Engagement*. *Chain of Attack* is actually Titan's number 1!). Unless you're careful from now on, you'll never be certain of getting the book you want, or worse, you might be told by some spotty kid that the shop's computer says that what you want isn't available when it's actually on the shelves elsewhere. Confused? You're going to be. And the new recruits to Star Trek fandom will suffer even worse.

I had hoped that when Paramount sanctioned an *Official Star Trek Fan Club* in the UK that quality standards would improve over here and UK fans would cease to be treated as second class citizens. But it's obvious now that that is not to be the case. Economics has reared one of its uglier heads: it's cheaper to just ship US editions to the UK and slap a sticker on them than it is to produce a UK specific edition. So stuff the UK fans, they're only the grubby little foreign plebs who actually buy the books: who cares about them? Well done Pocket Books: the Nagus would be proud of you.

Barbara Barrett



From The Depths

by Victor Milan (Titan £3.99)

***FROM** the Depths* tells the tale of two races, at war with each other, who live on the non-Federation water-world of Okeanos. One is the Vares, or Variants, genetically engineered descendants of Khan Noonian Singh's slaves who left earth during the 3rd World War to escape persecution. The other is the Susuru, who claim to be the planet's natives. The Enterprise is sent to take UFP Commissioner for Interspecies Affairs, Moriah Wayne, there to sort things out but when they get there they find that the Susuru are being advised by Klingon 'observers' led by Kain — a Klingon with a personal grudge against Kirk.

Aspects of this novel irritated me: Commissioner Wayne was painted as the stereotypical evil, arrogant, irrational, man-hating feminist (one of American fiction's favourite bogeypersons at the moment). I was misled into thinking *From the Depths* would degenerate into an anti-feminist diatribe and had problems believing such 20th century concerns will still persist 300 years from now. However this aspect of Wayne's character, wholly unnecessary to the plot, vanished from the story so soon that I suspect the author was simply preaching from one of his own favourite soapboxs. Wayne turns out to be not only totally ill-chosen for her task and ignorant of her own job's needs and skills, but also so utterly unhinged that she eventually betrays the UFP and the Enterprise to the Klingons, and engages in a little mass murder to pass the time. Wayne is to diplomacy what Herod was to Mothercare.

Later it's made clear she was a political appointee who didn't go through the tests and training that most UFP delegates get and that would've prevented such a nutter getting a commissioner's job. So I could accept Wayne and her behaviour, but what I couldn't believe was McCoy's psychoanalysis of her; not only unnecessary to the story but also pure hot air bar-stool pseudo-psychology. Milan's inability to distinguish between psychology and psychiatry (or rather his McCoy getting

it wrong) was a dead giveaway the author didn't know what he was talking about. Look Victor, if you're going to use psychology then do us a favour and research it as well as you do the TREK universe — or better yet, leave it out. Other irritants were superfluous continuity and Kain's assumption that by causing trouble on Okeanos the Enterprise and Kirk would inevitably be the Federation's response: it was all his clever plan to lure Kirk to his doom. Really now, this is becoming a boring cliche: want Kirk? Then blow up something and he'll be there, the Federation never send anyone else! My credulity was stretched to a monofilament.

Victor Milan is over-fond of American colloquialisms. American readers don't notice this but it shows a lack of regard for non-American readers, both by authors and editors at Pocket Books. American 20th century slang in the 23rd century? No, I don't buy it, and besides, it dates the story. When the character is an American then maybe idiomatic US slang is appropriate for them, but when they're not American, and sometimes not even human, it jars. My reaction to it is rather like the reaction one would have if in a 2nd World War film the Nazis went round exclaiming "Beggorah", or "Cor-Blimey Gov".

Now, having said all that you'd be forgiven for thinking I didn't like *From the Depths*: wrong. The story is well told, consistent with the STAR TREK universe, the plot tight, the characters (apart from Wayne) both familiar and new, well drawn and multi-dimensional, and it has one of the better written space-battles I've read in a TREK novel. It has some really good moments.

I also really liked the Vares. Unlike other survivors of Kahn's Eugenics wars (for example those in *The Masterpiece Society*) they don't breed for perfection, but specialise their bodies to their working environments. The Vares' society was well conceived and explored and I found them interesting and totally believable.

All in all I found it an above average, enjoyable, and entertaining novel, well worth the purchase price despite the faults described. (7)

The Great Starship Race
by Diane Carey (Titan £3.99)

THE REY, a race descended from herbivores (who've a rather spectacular instinctive defence mechanism against predators), are about to join the UFP. In order to celebrate their incorporation day they've inaugurated a no-rules, all-comers, starship race. The finishing line, the Rey's secret homeworld, can only be reached by following marker buoys point-to-point through dangerous space.

The Enterprise competes, and so does a Romulan battle cruiser, captained by a rogue commander who's convinced that the Rey are the greatest threat to the Empire that have ever existed and who's determined to exterminate them. He joined the race in order to see a Rey and confirm they're who he thinks they are. He does, but he has to finish the race course in order to reach the Rey's homeworld. Kirk of course attempts to discover the Romulan's true motives and, once he knows, to stop them.

I was disappointed by this novel because Carey, Dillard, Ferguson, Duane, and Morwood did make a collective effort to produce STAR TREK novels that were internally consistent with each other and shared many supporting characters. They created my favourite "reality-pocket" of STAR TREK and I was looking forward to re-meeting old friends, but alas, this is very much a stand-alone novel.

Some of the foundations to the tale are a bit dodgy; why is the location of the Rey's homeworld a secret, when their existence is public knowledge? Why did Starfleet approve of Kirk, and three other starship captains, joining in the race for no apparent reason other than the captains' whim? And why did everyone get upright over the Romulans' participation when the Tholian entry was accepted without suspicion?

Romulans are my own favourite alien race from the Classic series, and I'm pleased to say they were competently handled by Carey. She does Romulans very, very well and the Romulan commander was the best developed of the supporting characters. Kirk, Spock & co and the rest of the STAR TREK universe were handled OK too — I've read better, but I've also read much much worse.

That really sums up *The Great Starship Race*; it's not brilliant, but it's not particularly dull either. There's nothing in it to get really enthusiastic over and nothing to cringe over, or get overly worked up about. It's one of those Star Treks that falls exactly in the middle of every category. (5)

Best Destiny
by Diane Carey (Pocket Books £4. 50)

BEST DESTINY is two interconnected stories, one set when young Jimmy T Kirk was a rebellious, underachieving, juvenile delinquent, and the other as Captain Kirk returns the Enterprise to be decommissioned immediately after *The Undiscovered Country*.

One is a right-of-passage story; young Jimmy is taken aboard the newly commissioned Enterprise by his Starfleet father George, with the consent of its first captain, Robert April, in an attempt to rehabilitate Jimmy. They take a side trip in a shuttle craft and are attacked by pirates. Mutually disabled, the pirates and the shuttlecraft crew have a very original battle in which Jimmy plays a decisive role. For me that was the best part of the novel, I was so caught up in the story that I found I was gripping my copy harder and harder as the tension mounted: wonderful stuff. Aboard the pirate ship Jimmy meets Roy Moss, a boy who's exactly what Jimmy could become, and is so repelled by the parts of himself he sees that he reconciles with his father and determines to enrol in Starfleet. This section of the novel is very much a sequel to the earlier *Final Frontier*.

The other story failed to reach the standard of the first, but only by a fraction. In this the homeward bound Enterprise detects emissions that suggest a starship's warp engines have exploded and races to the scene. Such an event is a priority-one rescue emergency that all UFP ships must respond to instantly, regardless of mission or orders. It turns out that the adult Roy Moss is the villain, and Kirk finds himself confronting his first nemesis.

This story ends with Starfleet recognising the unique abilities and value of the constitution class starships and experienced crews, and deciding that they shouldn't be decommissioned — the Enterprise and her Captain and crew are to be kept on, indefinitely. That rather neatly sets the stage for post-*Star Trek VI* novels and perhaps another film? I can see it now *Star Trek VII — The Search For Zimmer Frames, The Undiscovered False Teeth, The Wrath of Arthritis*, or even *The Final Beer Belly*?

Anyway, on the whole it was a very good novel. I only had to squint my mind's eye once, when the narrative demanded that I imagine "pill-shaped orbs": Oh well, if D59 can have hourglass shaped orbs then I suppose it's only fair that classic TREK have pill-shaped ones. However, one thing really did spoil this book for me, and that was the attitude of the writers.

One of the things I get really annoyed over is (what I call) Ameri-opia: the inability of most Americans to realise there is a real world beyond the political borders of the United States. In Gene Roddenberry's vision he deliberately populated STAR TREK with characters from different races, cultures and countries, working together, celebrating their diversity, and carrying that celebration to other stars. I'm Irish by birth and culture, American by upbringing and education, and a UKer by adoption and choice: so you can well imagine how that vision appeals to me on a very personal level. I feel betrayed when the vision isn't upheld.

Some STAR TREK authors are Ameriopic in small ways, putting American slang in the mouths of Klingons (see From the Depths above), or using references to American history that, to other english speakers, are obscure and meaningless; just as a British author's unexplained reference to 1066 or a Roman Bath would be to them (Yanks think the latter's either a tub or an obscene sexual practice). Although that's annoying it is understandable. But some STAR TREK author are so chronically afflicted with Ameri-opia that they think UFP equals USA in every tiny detail, and see STAR TREK as an extension of their pro-USA patriotism.

When I come across authors like that I feel several things; I pity them their narrowness and their ignorance; I feel they've raped the very ideals of STAR TREK, that they've betrayed the vision; and that in a very real sense they've missed the point of it all. When they're good-to-passable authors I wonder how much better their work could be if only they'd expand their horizons and open their minds, and I sigh for the might-have-beens. (I dread to think what'll happen if Ameri-opic American writers and script editors, unsupervised by Brits, get hold of DOCTOR WHO).

Diane Carey and her partner/collaborator Gregory Brodeur are just that type of authors. The introduction to *Best Destiny* (and the afterword to *Final Frontier*) is pure, self admitted, flag-waving jingoism — the UFP is the new American dream, all ya gotta do is eat mom's apple pie and *believe*. Unfortunately this attitude isn't restricted to the introduction, but taints the narrative as well.

If it hadn't been for that I might have awarded *Best Destiny* a (9), but as they soured my STAR TREK experience they get a grudged (6).

The Price of the Phoenix
By S Marshak and M Culbreath (Titan Books £3. 99)

OMNE, scientist dictator of a non-aligned freeport planet, invents a combined transporter/replicator that can make copies at a distance, not only of material forms but also of the living soul.

Omne uses his device to kidnap Kirk, leaving a lifeless duplicate behind to make the Enterprise crew believe that he's dead. But Omne also makes a living duplicate of Kirk, Kirk2, whom Omne offers to sell to Spock — the price being Spock's betrayal of the Federation. Omne has kept the original Kirk because he feels it would be a personal challenge to dominate and break Kirk to his will, and indeed this was his prime motive in acquiring Kirk in the first place.

Needless to say Spock rescues both Kirks, aided by a Romulan; 'the Commander' from *The Enterprise Incident*, (who incidentally sorts out what to do with James, the 'spare' Kirk). Omne loses the battle, but we're promised that the war is not yet over. (Meaning: *The Fate of the Phoenix* will be published in November...)

I'm told that Marshak and Culbreath are an acquired taste, and that the Phoenix pair are the books which justify acquiring that taste, but believe me, while I've tried hard to do so, I've yet to succeed.In their reality everyone seems more concerned about, and motivated by, metaphysics than practicality. Here, heroes and villains have long philosophical debates; even in the middle of hand-to-hand combat. Their Kirk takes no action until after he has verbally justified it, sometimes at great length. Their Spock is an emotionally tormented being who doesn't internalize that torment but displays it openly and too often), and who, when given a choice between following regulations and logic or his own heart, places his own selfish personal desires before duty. This Spock, while not canon now in the post-movie era, could've been justified by the TV canon

SURVIVORS

Revenge/Something of Value/A Beginning
BBV5187 - £10.99

TAPE SIX's bumper batch of episodes brings season one, and perhaps BBC Video's series of releases, to a close.

Given the small world of the Death's aftermath, it's inevitable that Anne Tranter, the woman who absandoned Vic in *Genesis*, would turn up at the Manor House. *Revenge* makes good use of the situation, describing how the catharsis of meeting her brings Vic back from the verge of suicide, but suffers from its OB recording. It lacks both the atmosphere of film and the immediacy of studio video, which would have well suited such a bare, character driven piece — it's conclusion, in fact, might almost be a stage play.

Hugh Walters copes well with the challenge of stepping into another man's role mid-season, though the attempt to disguise this change through a bungled suicide attempt which leaves him scarred is less than convincing. But dramatic problems arise from the bleakly realistic nature of this episode — nobody really works out their personality problems to emerge a better person here, with the destruction of his dreams of revenge almost destroying Vic before he reaches the point where he can carry on muddling through. But, perhaps because of the flat OB shooting in this confrontation with Anne, we don't get a satisfyingly *destructive* conclusion either. As a character study, *Revenge* is effective. As part of a supposed adventure series it lacks a little something... (7)

Something of Value sees the appearance of the nastiest and most underhanded group of villains to have appeared in the series for quite some time. Whereas most SURVIVORS nasties tend to be misunderstood, with their own approaches to survival, this bunch are nothing more than parasites raiding whatever they can from whoever they can. *Something of Value* develops the plot nicely, as it becomes clear that something sinister's going on with the community's new recruit, only for the details to emerge too late for the trap to be avoided...though one does realise that it could all have been avoided if the Abby's group had bothered to equip themselves with two-way radios, one of the major omissions of the series. A second blow to the series' credibility strikes when one remembers that Anne and Donny almost abandoned the petrol which is now so valuable an episode before.

Again, *Something of Value* must be judged by the standards of SURVIVORS — it's not the knuckle-whitening thriller other series might have made it, but that's not what SURVIVORS was about...it remains interesting throughout, up to the final developments of the plot, and is worth seeing (8)

And finally, *A Beginning* brings the season to a close. The previous few episodes make clear the dangers of letting the survivors become too settled in one place, as the series began to overbalance towards soap. *A Beginning* draws upon a number of plot threads from earlier in the season to lay the ground-work for season two, though the specifics had clearly not been worked out at the time, as Charles Vaughn's community at Whitecross isn't among those mentioned here. Instead, a disillusioned and depressed Abby makes her way to Jimmy Garland's ancestral home, to find that Garland's war ended peacefully after Knox's death... Meanwhile Greg and the rest of what now seems to be his group find themselves facing up to the implications of linkages between communities — whether one can still tell problems, such as the sick and possibly infectious woman dumped in their lap, to move on elsewhere under such conditions.

This episode is another character based piece, concentrating in particular on Abby, who becomes the first survivor to consummate a relationship since the Death (though Greg and Jenny must have done so offscreen, as her pregnancy is announced here). Ultimately, *A Beginning* is as much an end, providing an effective (and heartwarming) culmination to the first season... I can still remember the final sequence of this episode from first time round, and it remains as effective to anyone who's come to care for these characters now as it was then.(8)

It's unfortunate that the future of the Survivors releases appears to be in doubt: BBC Video made a cardinal mistake in their handling of SURVIVORS. They seem to have thought that its target market was the DOCTOR WHO/BLAKE'S 7 crowd, and to an extent they were right, but it is also a series with a wider and very different appeal. In particular, it's a serial, and by dropping back their schedule to create a four month gap between releases, they lost the momentum which would have kept the casual customer. It's a point they've recognised with POLDARK and THE ONEDIN LINE, releasing tapes at monthly intervals. They should have applied the same approach to SURVIVORS.

The killing blow, if that's what it was, came of course when this slowing of the release rate allowed UK Gold to get ahead of BBC Video. That, perversely, is why BBC Video should now continue releasing the series — if they get it right now, they'll catch all the UK Golders who've enjoyed season two without taping it, and can't be bothered to wait for its next screening (and, of course, poor satellite-deprived individuals like myself!). I can't wait to see *Lights of London* again...

Anthony Brown

Ian McCulloch as Greg Preston (©BBC Video)

Spock when Marshak and Culbreath were writing: it's just that he's not my Spock and I don't like him.

In their Trek universe a rather narrow world-view is shared by all the races of the galaxy as the "morally correct" viewpoint. Furthermore that philosophy's underlying assumptions are taken to be unquestioningly understood by everyone, including the reader. This sometimes makes the characters baffling and inexplicable. Marshak and Culbreath's assumption that 'morals' (a human idea) have a reality of their own (like rocks), independent of time, place, culture, or the beings that conceive them, gives their novels a sometimes charming, and sometimes frightening, naivety.

On the down side they're not skilled writers and their style is less that of a storyteller and more like a civil servant's formal report writing style (an extremely inappropriate style when used in dialogue) which makes them a bit unpalatable at times. Often when reading Marshak and Culbreath I feel; 'Great draft — When are they going to get a professional to turn it into a novel?".

On the plus side they are fans-turned-writers, and as fans they're very aware of continuity and canon, so nothing they do ever blatantly contradicts STAR TREK lore as it was. Also, their hunger for the new is a fan's hunger, so you can guarantee that few if any STAR TREK cliches rear their ugly heads in a Marshak and Culbreath novel, and that their ideas will be fresh and original.

Many of the concepts invented by Marshak and Culbreath for this tale have, in less dramatic forms, resurfaced in TNG holodeck/replicator technology, and have turned up as key elements in TNG tales such as *Elementary, Dear Data, Unnatural Selection*, and, most recently, *Second Chances*. I think that in itself speaks volumes about the originality of their ideas.

If this book had been recently written I'd have only given it a (3), but taking into account its historical context and the fact that when it was written its ideas were new and fresh, I think it deserves a (6).

Firestorm
by LA Graf (Pocket Books £3.99)

THE PLANET of Rakatan is a geological marvel and boasts the galaxy's largest known 'stratovolcano', Rakatan Mons, a volcano so huge it covers a large portion of one of Rakatan's hemispheres. A Federation geological expedition studying the planet from an orbiting moon-base believe they have discovered sentient life within the volcano. The Enterprise is sent to investigate and validate the geological team's data and determine if the Prime Directive applies.

What complicates matters is the presence of an Elasian expedition, allegedly mining dilithium — a mineral the geologists claim can not be there — on the slopes of Rakatan Mons. The Elasians claim the planet by right of first discovery and want the Federation to go away and leave *their* planet alone. Relations between the scientists and the Elasians have not been good. The Elasians are led by the young Dohlman of Elas, who upon maturity will be the ruler of the planet. The Dohlman will be mature on the day that she sheds tears that will enslave to her any male upon whom they fall.

The story that develops is one of Elasian political intrigue and plots, with the Enterprise, its landing party, and the scientists, caught in the crossfire. The STAR TREK episode *Elaan of Troyus* was one I didn't like at all — a contrived "Kirk gets the girl by proving human males are real men, brings down a dominant female and teaches her the proper, subordinate, place" story. So when I saw *Firestorm was* about the same society I was a bit apprehensive: would Firestorm enrage the feminist within me as much as had *Elaan of Troyus*?

I'm pleased to say it didn't. Elasian culture and evolution is well handled and explored: rationalised and made much more believable for to 90's readership. Uhura is the central character in *Firestorm*, sharing the limelight with Chekov and the Dohlman Israi, and to a lesser extent Sulu. Kirk is relegated to a supporting role but not, by any means, left out of the action.

I really enjoyed this story. There were few signs of the poor usage of English that have blighted Graf novels in the past, and the plotting was tight and the story well paced, with all its elements coming together neatly at the end. *Firestorm's* continuity was good and the Enterprise was represented as a coherent team rather than an extension of Kirk. The characters developed and grew as the story developed, and their interaction was excellent. By the end I felt I knew Israi and here culture very well indeed. I count all that as the signs of a good entertaining story , very well told. Highly recommended (8).

Barbara Barrett

Tragedy Day

Virgin Books - £4.99
February 17th

TRAGEDY DAY is something of a strange animal — a highly amusing and extremely well written creature, but strange all the same...

Almost all of the previous NEW ADVENTURES could be imagined as televised stories, with the exception perhaps of things like *Revelation* and maybe *Lucifer Rising*, both of which would be hampered by budgetry limitations. *Tragedy Day* would never make it to the small screen, even if it had the opportunity — it's just too silly. Basically, it's Season Seventeen meets *The Happiness Patrol* meets Pip and Jane Baker. But don't let that put you off — it's brilliant, and I've never heard so much scientific gobbledegook since Jon Pertwee was the Doctor.

Plot wise, it's well-paced and tightly written, to use such clichéd reviewers' parlance — and basically, the whole thing's the first Doctor's fault. Grumpy old first Doc landed on a planet, saved its people from the radiation sickness caused by a crashed space-ship, and in the process took away with him a piece of red glass from the spaceship which the locals believed cursed them. Then, years and years and years later, the small Scottish Doctor lands in the Empire City of the same planet, Olleril, now colonised and more or less run by the mysterious Cult Of Luminus, to find himself pursued by two bounty-hunters hired by the owners of the glass, the evil Friars of Pangloss...

The planet's culture, by the way, is now a pastiche of 20th century earth life, later revealed to be based on books, including *The Smash Hits Year Book*! While the people aren't too busy being oppressed or mercenary, everything in their lives revolves around television, particularly shows such as Martha and Arthur — but more about them later. Many of the marvellous and totally implausible characters within this culture, and particularly its media, turn out to be androids, and it doesn't take much mental exercise to realise that Gareth is passing sarky comment on the state of today's TV and music. Such 'celebroids' include Wendy and Robert Clifton, a husband and wife team of moronic chat-show hosts and a teeny-bop pop group of male bimbos who just happen to be called Fancy That! Remind you of anyone. I'm sure Gareth didn't mean to suggest anything about the originals by parodying them as robots, but then...

But the most memorable character in the whole novel just happens to be one Eddie McCartney, a bounty-hunter of sorts, who is actually a gun-slinging spider/humanoid mutant with as broad a Yorkshire accent as the cast of LAST OF THE SUMMER WINE. I could imagine him played by Brian Glover... Of course, the accent, like the Doctor's, is just a co-incidence, as the narrative points out — after all, in all the other worlds where humanoids develop, the same speech patterns and accents are bound to occur somewhere. Honest, guv!

The Tragedy Day itself is a festival of fundraising for the poor of Olleril — an Ollerilian version of CHILDREN IN NEED or the Telethon, with lots of charity games and easings of conscience. But on that day the boy-genius leader of the Luminus Cult, Cripin, plans to overthrow Empire City from his super-submarine, controlling the population by convincing them they're characters from the *Martha and Arthur* sit-com — complete with TV-set candy-strip painted houses and thought-implanted dialogue. Crispin's carefully, or perhaps I should say obsessively, catalogued collection of CAPTAIN MILLENIUM videos makes him reminiscent of fans of another science-fiction series, and I loved all his spoilt temper tantrums. My favourite part of the book is a scene between Crispin and the Doctor, when Crispin reminds him of his exploits on the planet Argos, where the Doctor claims to have 'averted a catalogue of disasters...' Very poor, but very funny all the same.

It may all sound very silly, but after so many dark, depressing and humourless 'Isn't the Earth going to be a polluted and awful slum of a planet for the next couple of centuries/or in a parallel universe' books, *Tragedy Day* is a breath of fresh air. Though, you can have too much of a good thing. After all, *No Future* featured The Goodies and Margo and Jerry Leadbetter, and I might get fed up if Virgin tried to churn out similarly witty books time after time. What's needed is a bit more planning of the schedules, so that we don't get a run of dark depressing books followed by five more light-hearted ones. Rotate them!

Apart from the acquisition of the Red Glass, which doesn't turn out to be that relevant to the narrative anyway, *Tragedy Day* features no old monsters and no villains from some unknown between-stories past. It's old fashioned — the Doctor lands on a planet by accident, does a bit of exploring, realises things aren't as they should be and puts them right. No Masterplan, no dark depressing machinations or betrayal, just a straight forward adventure story. That's the way it should be. Despite this, however, the seventh Doctor is the closest he's been to the television in a long time. A lot of people, myself included, now associate him more with the books than the television nowadays, where he's had a tendency to become a gestalt of influences from the previous Doctors, but I'm glad to say that Gareth has captured him perfectly.

Ace is also great. No angst, no combat suit, no *Terminator*-rubbish (well, she did look more like Sarah Connor on the cover of *Conundrum*). All that's gently glossed over with a single line — "She was finally at peace with the universe she was travelling through". The book doesn't revolve around her, as has so often been the case, and she's once more just a character, rather than a catalyst for the plot-line, and a very good one at that. I'm even beginning to like her again. Doesn't it make all that stuff between *Deceit* and *No Future* seem futile now?

Tragedy Day reminded me of the way DOCTOR WHO used to be when I was little. It's captured all that was witty and clever about it, and as its a book there are no bad sets or acting to get in the way. And any book that lets Bernice sum up the situation with the line, "And he would have gotten away with it if it hadn't been for us meddling adults", wins my vote.

Still, I'm sure there'll be a few readers sitting at home tut-tutting that DOCTOR WHO has no business being witty and amusing, as well as being dramatic. Well, try *Tragedy Day* and see how wrong you are for yourselves.(9)

Amanda Murray

SKONNOS 18

"I saw JNT's name up on a TV monitor and I thought, "Damn, he's setting my questions..."

Skonnos doesn't really move me to criticise it too much. In fact it doesn't move me at all, I'm quite apathetic about it to be honest. I've seen worse, but considering that the main feature is an interview with Mastermind Gavin Fuller, I'm hard pushed to remember when.

The Fuller interview, from which the above quote comes from, was actually quite interesting, and he seems far removed from the Anorak/carrier bag image. The rest of *Skonnos* seemed to consist of Target novel reviews and UK Gold schedules. The cover was very effective, and the whole thing's obviously had a lot of effort put into it. All that's really needed is some fresh material, even if that just means covering NEW ADVENTURES, as the whole feel is retrospective and inward looking. *Skonnos* gets a (4), but I still want to see future issues as I'd like to see it improve.

Info: Mark Benoy, 22 Nuthatch Gardens, Broadwater Green, W.Thamesmead, London, SE28 ODJ.

REVIA

"Quickly packing our magical paraphanalia and packing Hartnell's body in dry ice for the trip back to Ian (Levine), we left the catacombs and sealed them of..."

I have to admit that at first I was very tempted to just put this in the bin and dismiss it as a load of old rubbish. Square in shape (due to funny paper sizes) *Revia*'s from America and as such I suppose we have to make allowances for cultural differences, such as humour, phraseology and the market it's aimed at.

Certainly, anything with fiction which has Ace using "Hey, bloke!" as a colloquial form of address won't go down too well over here

The quote heading this review comes from a particularly dreadful mock seance held with various dead (and 'nearly' dead) actors from the series. Unfunny and vaguely tasteless it mostly seemed to concern Jon Pertwee's trousers, or should I say pants...

The articles are on the basic side, but perhaps that's the sort of thing American fans want, although I have to admit there were a few pretty interesting bits and pieces in there, such as a feature on scripts that never made it to screen, some of which I'd never heard of.

It has potential, and as it's still early days I won't condemn it too much and I'll give it a generous (5). Perhaps all that's needed is a couple of different writers, as the same names seemed to crop up a lot...

Info: Revia, 1481 Concord Drive, Downers Grove, IL 0516, USA
Or: >INTERNET: rassilon@vpnet.chi.il.us

M3

"This is such a mixture of good and bad that it's worth taking a look."

M3 stands for the three M's in Multi-Media Magazine, apparently. Covering everything from TWIN PEAKS and MORK

top

Issue Five includes stuff on Audio Who, Time & Interference, Hartnell merchendise, Daytime TV, Death to the Daleks, Rumours, Invasion of Time, seaQuest DSV, Horror in Who, Write your own Hartnell story, The end of Dr Who?, Steven Berkoff, Harold Pinter, The Archimandrite and, of course, the Laberdeens. Plus all the usual malarkey.

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Printed Matters

Our quarterly fanzine review column...

AND MINDY to *Forbidden Planet* it's about as un-WHO orientated as you can get. It's also well produced and has a very good cover, but unfortunately contents-wise it's as stale as a week old loaf of bread, as if those involved were only going through the motions for the sake of producing an end product.

Comparing the first issue of M3 with this latest one, there is very little difference at all. Even the cover is still yellow, which, although startling, does little to flatter the artwork. The cartoon at the beginning (unusually flippant observations by Jeremy) was about as funny as a dead squirrel, and made about as much sense.

I couldn't resist using the above quote, from M3's merchandise review section, although it does describe it accurately. A mixture of bad and good points, with interest generally depending on whether they feature a telefantasy series that interests you...

Basically it's a sort of B/W A5 multi-media version of *The Frame*, but not as interesting. Okay if you want to know about VCR's and stuff. (6)

Info: *35 Pinewood Park, Livingston, EH54 8NN*

CLUB TROPICANA 4

"So, Pertwee is a Tory is he? Bollocks!"

Club Tropicana is an interesting A5 fanzine with little or no artwork (depending which issue you buy), which described itself in the previous issue as 'Postmodern Allsorts'. That it certainly is, and features a variety of articles on most telefantasy series, although like most 'zines reviewed here, it has a strong DOCTOR WHO bias.

Amongst other things, one of the highlights of issue 4 was an honest and fun appraisal of *Terror of the Autons*, boldly challenging Paul Cornell's review in this very magazine. Serious enough to appeal to some tastes, *Club Tropicana* still has a generous pinch of humour and a twist of sarcasm which allows it to appeal to others.

In an earlier issue CT (I wonder where they got the idea for the name from?) actually has DWB's very own executive editor/publishing magnate/nice-man-who-signs-the-cheques etc. Gary Leigh admitting to liking a story produced by JNT as well as revealing his preference for chicken mesquite sandwichs from Marks and Sparks. Must be good.

The editorship switched from John Pettigrew to Daniel O'Mahony at issue three, and I have to admit that the earlier issues were just that little bit sillier and more off-the-wall, with a sprinkling of ridiculous cartoons and tacky pictures. The current absence of artwork and columns is hard on the eyes, but comparing issue four to issue one, it's come on in leaps and bounds, and so deserves a healthy (7).

Info: *Daniel O'Mahony, 21 Victoria Road, Fordingbridge, Hants, SP6 1DD*

SPECTRUM - Season Two, Story One

"Oh, I get the picture, we've been sent a couple of YTS trainees, have we?"

Spectrum is probably the most unusual fanzine I've come across. It has no artwork and comes in the form of a script. This issue of *Spectrum, Requiem for a Street*, is part of a whole series of stories based around specific people and events and written in the style of a different telefantasy programme each issue.

This issue, by Andrew Trowbridge, is a SAPPHIRE AND STEEL pastiche, although it is Gold and Radium, two trainee agents, who are assigned, causing one of the regular human characters to make the above comment. Amusing, dramatic and highly toongue-in-cheek all at the same time, Spectrum gets a (7), though it could benefit from some art-work.

Info: *4 New Cottages, Manor Farm, Moonton-up-Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 5NL*

FANBOY 1

"We all know of the stereotyped fanboy image which is ridiculed and deplored by the more 'mature' fans, but stop! Stop and look inside yourself — is it not there? Can you not see a small nugget of obsession within you...?"

The observant amongst you may recognise the above quote, as it isn't from *Fanboy* at all. It's from *Skaro*. However, it was the inspiration for *Fanboy*, edited by Matt Jones, and unusually for a high quality 'good' fanzine, it's totally free. Good grief, we have a philanthropist in our midst, whatever next?

The fanzine itself isn't bad either, a bit 'deep' in parts for my taste, but with some articles which genuinely convey a love for DOCTOR WHO, but without fanaticism. THE TOMORROW PEOPLE AND BLAKE'S SEVEN get a look in as well.

Also on the plus side, there's a Bernice Summerfield-oriented piece of fiction — the first I've seen outside of a Virgin book, but on the downside it is a bit spartan and the whole look would benefit from some artwork or photos. *Fanboy* definitely merits an (8) and makes me wonder why, when Matt Jones can come up with a fanzine of this calibre for free, people are still charging £1.50+ for complete drivel?

Info: *Matt Jones, 67 Hawksley Road, London N16 0TL.*

PAISLEY PATTERN 45

"best wishes Auntie Jane and Uncle Pip Xmas 1993."

Paisley Pattern is [still] the fanzine of the Glasgow DOCTOR WHO group, and is edited in rotation by three different people, which perhaps explains how they manage to perform the miracle of putting out a 24 page 'zine every month, whilst still keeping it fresh, interesting and remarkably well put together.

As in the last issue I looked at the artwork is excellent, although for those outside the group Paisley Pattern is let down by an excess of unexplained in-jokes. A regular feature is now a series of poems devoted to Skaro editor Ness Bishop (this month's is called Dreamy-Ness) which does lead me to doubt co-editor Alister McGown's sanity a little...

This issue is described as *The Paisley Pattern DOCTOR WHO Annual* and is laid out is if it were a sixties DOCTOR WHO annual, complete with original and awful stories featuring DOCTOR WHO and TARDIS such as The Rules of Lu-Ton, a TARDIS Teaser crossword and a feature on The Mysterious Dr Who. Even the price, on the bottom corner of the inside page has been cut off by an 'Elder relative.' Auntie Jane perhaps...? A sort of nostalgic acid trip of a fanzine. (9) Does need a few more writers though, perhaps people from outside the group...?

Info: *Alistair McGown, 6 Whitfield Ave, Cambuslang, Glasgow G72 8NP*

COTTAGE UNDER SEIGE 1

"I tip-toed over to the window and drew the curtains and who was there but Matthew Waterhouse?! Oh, I thought, my luck's in, but then I noticed his ghostly pallor and clanking chains. Had Matthew become a Leather Dude?"

Definitely a publication for mature readers, *Cottage Under Siege* (I believe the title was stolen from a Terrance Dicks book chapter, but beware of double-entendres) is definitely not afraid to take the mickey. "A laugh a minute" is a horribly clichéd way to describe anything, but *Cottage* certainly got me giggling. The humour is sharp and often cruel, but all the funnier for its accuracy. A certain well known DOCTOR WHO/telefantasy mag is parodied in the highly camp issue one.

Edited by Gareth Roberts and Neil Corry, *Cottage* also features 'Pass notes' on the Cyber-Controller, an article almost criticising fandom's actions on how it 'killed' Jon Pertwee (figuratively, of course), by Paul Cornell of all people, and a recipe for Vervoid Biscuits(?!)

If you like serious debate and reviews of NEW ADVENTURES then don't bother, you're not the sort of reader *Cottage* wants, or will please... But as an added incentive, there's a free poster of Servalan, who's on the cover as well, wearing the sort of smile which makes her look, if I might say so, as if she's just performed a particularly obscene but rather enjoyable act with some leather-clad subordinate.

All I can say is, 'Oh Travis...' Or perhaps that should be 'Oh Gareth and Neil...'(10)

Info: *Neil Corry, 66 Queen Mary Road, Upper Norwood, London*

Fanzine of the Season

SE19 3NP

Circus 1

"For me, U2 are the teenage equivalent of Jon Pertwee."

Circus is practically faultless: it's witty, entertaining and serious all at once. If there is anything I could possibly compare this to it's the now defunct *Star Begotten*. *Circus* is what *Star Begotten* should have been like, but with humour and humility. And this is only the first issue...

In fact, *Circus* is the first vaguely serious fanzine in a long while that I've sat and read from cover to cover. One of the main reasons for this is that all the features and fiction were short and snappy, never more than a couple of pages long — longer than that and you can lose interest.

The articles were punctuated with artwork and totally irrelevant little adverts from years and years ago, as well as photos, my favourite of which was a picture of Pertwee faking a heart-attack from some play or other years ago. (Perhaps it would have been more at home amongst the *Revta* seance though!)

Although this issue is predominantly WHO-based, lots of other diverse thins were featured, the most enjoyable of which was an overview of HANCOCK'S HALF-HOUR, accompanied by an episode guide, and a QUATERMASS feature. The obligatory Topping and Connors things were in there, but otherwise most of the names were new, which is encouraging. Anything which has the temerity to compare Pertwee to U2 is well worth the £2.00 price tag, and deserves the dubious title of 'Fanzine of the Month'.(10)

Info: *Colin Brockhurst, 73 Vann Road, Fernhurst, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 3NP.*

Amanda Murray

ARC OF INFINITY

BBC Video £10.99
March 7th

IF ANY Doctor's era could be said to have a beginning, middle and an end, then it must surely be that of the fifth — Peter Davison. His three seasons were all different. Season nineteen was rather brash and 'youthful', much like the Doctor himself, whereas season twenty-one was a triumphant 'last lap' with Davison's Doctor self confident and secure. Season twenty however is something of an enigma. Generally considered to be a dull let down when compared to season nineteen, these seven stories (if one includes *The Five Doctors*) appear somewhat drab, especially the much maligned *Terminus*. Indeed the season appears, it would seem, in most critic's minds to consist solely of the Guardian trilogy, with the other stories mere fillers. BBC Video themselves have perpetuated this view by releasing the aforementioned trilogy, and have only now acknowledged that there were other stories 'worthy' of release. And so, eleven years after its initial transmission, we now have *Arc Of Infinity*.

The twentieth season was intended to include an element from the Doctor's past in each of the stories. Therefore it seemed appropriate that the season should begin with the return of the 'villain' who had menaced the Doctor and Time Lord society at the beginning of the tenth season — Omega. But is the word villain really an accurate description? Much information concerning Gallifrey and the Time Lords had been established in the decade since *The Three Doctors*, with stories such as *The Deadly Assassin* and *The Invasion of Time* portraying Rassilon as the hero of Time Lord Society, the first Time Lord, a figure worshipped almost as a god — so much so that his name was used to prefix anything and everything (one wonders if the name Rassilon is a registered trademark on Gallifrey — perhaps the High Council should consider hiring Roger Hancock to protect their interests!!)

Arc of Infinity re-examines the established view of Omega. In *The Three Doctors* it was made clear that Omega had been driven mad by his years of solitude, combined with an obsessively paranoid personality. But underneath the bluster, the screams of "All things must be destroyed", there were glimpses of the man who had once existed and who longed to exist again. *Arc* was to expand upon this and create a character for whom the viewer could ultimately feel pity, and not a little anger at the Time Lord's treatment of him.

The story is also significant for the re-introduction of a radically different Tegan, complete with closely cropped hair and the infamous 'boob tube'. One wonders what Janet Fielding (in her latest incarnation as radical feminist) thinks of the clothes she had to wear, and which introduced a three-year period of sexploitation which seems increasingly embarrassing in retrospect... We'd all been shocked to see her apparent departure at the end of *Time-Flight*, so much so that the *Radio Times* letters page had seen fit to print an assurance that Tegan would be returning in the forthcoming season. Further assurance came in the pages of *Doctor Who Monthly* which printed a publicity still of the Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa taken on location in Amsterdam.

©BBC Video

As the story begins, however, it is clear that Tegan has been separated from the Doctor and Nyssa for some time (scope here for more than a couple of MISSING ADVENTURES perhaps?) — she has lost her job and appears to be taking some 'time off'. We meet her cousin Colin (is Tegan unique in that we meet various members of her family throughout her time in the series, rather than merely during her opening tale) and the scene moves to Amsterdam. The use of foreign locations in the programme has always been a bone of contention within fandom. While it is true that they prove that there is life beyond London and the Home Counties, in *Arc of Infinity* there is little justification for setting the story in Amsterdam. We are given a rather dubious explanation concerning the water-pressure available to the fusion booster below sea-level (which rather ignores the water-pressure available in *any* city from the domestic water mains!), but one can't help but think that the money would have been better spent elsewhere. Worst of all is the gruesome way that we are introduced to the setting of Amsterdam. Director Ron Jones uses a blatantly unsubtle establishing shot which would not look out of place in an ITC film series, and when combined with the strain of Tulips From Amsterdam all that is missing is a "Simon Templar" style voice-over introduction...

As episode one progresses it becomes clear that all is not well on Gallifrey, with treason committed by one of the members of the High Council, and what a sorry bunch the High Council were in those days! Aside from Paul Jerricho's ham-fisted Castellan, we have Max Harvey's ineffectual Cardinal Zorac (great SPACE 1999 name, Johnny!) and Elspet Gray's bland Chancellor Thalia. Fortunately the Council is saved by the performances of Leonard (THE GOOD OLD DAYS) Sachs and Michael Gough, magnificent as ever, as Hedin. The standard of your average Gallifreyan isn't up to much either, with Neil Daglish drippingly wet as Damon.

JNT always prided himself on the "quality" of the guest stars that he could attract to the show. Whilst his infamous comment about DOCTOR WHO being the new MORECAMBE AND WISE was several years in the future, season nineteen had given a taste of what was to come with the casting of light entertainment personalities such as Michael Robbins and Beryl Reid. Fortunately in the early years, these castings generally worked as the atmosphere of the show was conducive to producing serious drama. Season twenty's stories also contained many notable guest stars. From the world of light entertainment *Arc* presented us with the aforementioned Leonard Sachs, but most notable of all was Colin Baker as Maxil.

From today's perspective, it is difficult to objectively assess the casting of Colin for this story given that his appointment as Davison's replacement was only months away. In 1982/3 however Baker had not been seen on television for some time and reference was made to his OTT performance as Bayban the Butcher in the BLAKE'S 7 episode *The City at the Edge of the World*. In the 1970s however Baker had made his name as the scheming Paul Merroney in the later seasons of THE BROTHERS, and previews of *Arc* therefore made much play of Colin's reputation as a notable 'heavy' and Maxil's similar role. As a bumbling unsubtle guard, Maxil provided excellent comic relief to Paul Jerricho's unbearably straight Castellan (in itself a reference to Jerricho's weasly, ambitious character in another Kate O'Mara 'soap', TRIANGLE). But true to form Colin gave much more to the character. His enormous enthusiasm shines through and makes him more than just a relatively unimportant character. As Colin himself has said many times on the convention circuit, he tried to view *Arc* as being part of THE MAXIL SHOW, and thus sought to dominate every scene. Indeed his anecdote regarding "Esmerelda" is perhaps every bit as infamous as Nick Courtney's notorious Eyepatch!

The true nature of the threat facing Gallifrey and the Doctor remains unrevealed throughout the early episodes, with the credits merely listing the character as "The Renegade". The Doctor's return home allows the viewer a closer look at the society of the Time Lords, and while on the surface nothing much seems to have changed since *The Invasion Of Time*, the gathering of Time Lords in an 'airport coffee bar' seems vaguely incongruous. Indeed they look to be attending a cocktail party, and I almost expected to see a HITCH-HIKER'S style caption on screen informing me that "This Never Happens". The scenes on Gallifrey are very drawn out and ultimately prove not to be particularly interesting. Substantial cutting would have given a much tighter finished product, and while trimmed down to three episodes the story would have been pacey and absorbing, spread over four its limitations become clear.

Indeed, midway through episode three I became bored and found it difficult to remain interested in the story. The revelation however that the villain of the piece was Omega helps spice things up a little. Having enjoyed *The Three Doctors* when it was repeated in 1981 I could remember Stephen Thorne's powerful portrayal of Omega, but the new 1980s style Omega is in my view superior to the original. There are more dimensions [sic] to his character, and he shows himself to be more than a paranoid maniac — witness the famous scene by the market place organ as Omega feels again what it means to be genuinely alive. (Incidentally, isn't Omega dressed more like a *Spearhead From Space* Auton than a gardener?)

But one should not get overtly sentimental, and Omega soon reverts to the behaviour of *The Three Doctors*. His words to the Doctor about wanting to come home, wanting to find peace, echo the sentiments expressed by Hedin when he reveals his motives for helping Omega. But he ultimately returns to the "all things must die" routine. This is a sad waste as it would have been better, in my opinion, for Omega to have realised the instability of his bonding with the Doctor, and either turned his gun on himself or pleaded with the Doctor to shoot him. As it is we have the Doctor gunning down Omega, which is neither dramatically nor morally satisfying.

"Unsatisfying" describes the story as a whole. Johnny Byrne's script is imaginative in places but let down by the flat unengaging direction, the dreadful incidental music (very rare for a Davison story) and the shortcomings of the cast. The dialogue is occasionally painful on the ears, with Maxil spitting out lines such as "They have orders to kill at the slightest sign of resistance". On the other hand there are some good lines, such as Hedin's comment to Omega — "What we are, we owe to you."

As an individual story *Arc Of Infinity* falls into a middling bracket, alongside *Planet Of Fire*, *Enlightenment* and *Frontios*. Such stories are perfectly enjoyable, but at the end of the day nothing particularly special. The Davison era was lucky in that when it was good they were really good, and was even luckier in that its 'bad' stories (such as *Four To Doomsday* and *Timeflight)* are not on reflection really that bad. But one always thinks of *Caves*, *Earthshock* and *Resurrection* in connection with the Davison era. Thus it is all too easy to overlook stories such as *Arc* which are neither outrageously good or bad. I'll admit that I'm a great fan of the Davison stories and thus am inclined to be favourable from the onset. But although the story reminds us of the excitement as the twentieth anniversary approached, and sought to portray Omega as a sympathetic character and not just as a raging maniac, I cannot give the story much more than six out of ten. It's over long and fails to grip the viewer, so for their next Davison release let's home BBC Video release something better such as *The Visitation* and/or *Kinda*. (6)

Duncan Harvey